



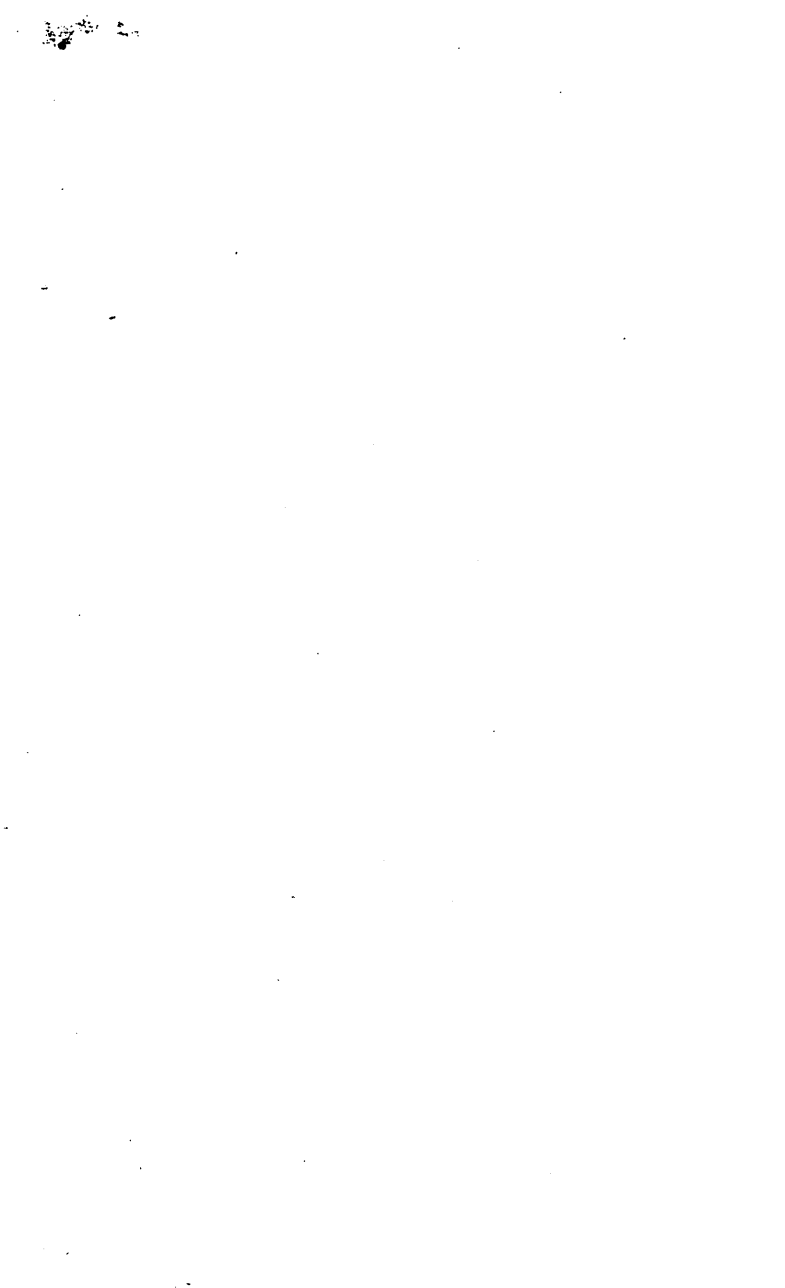
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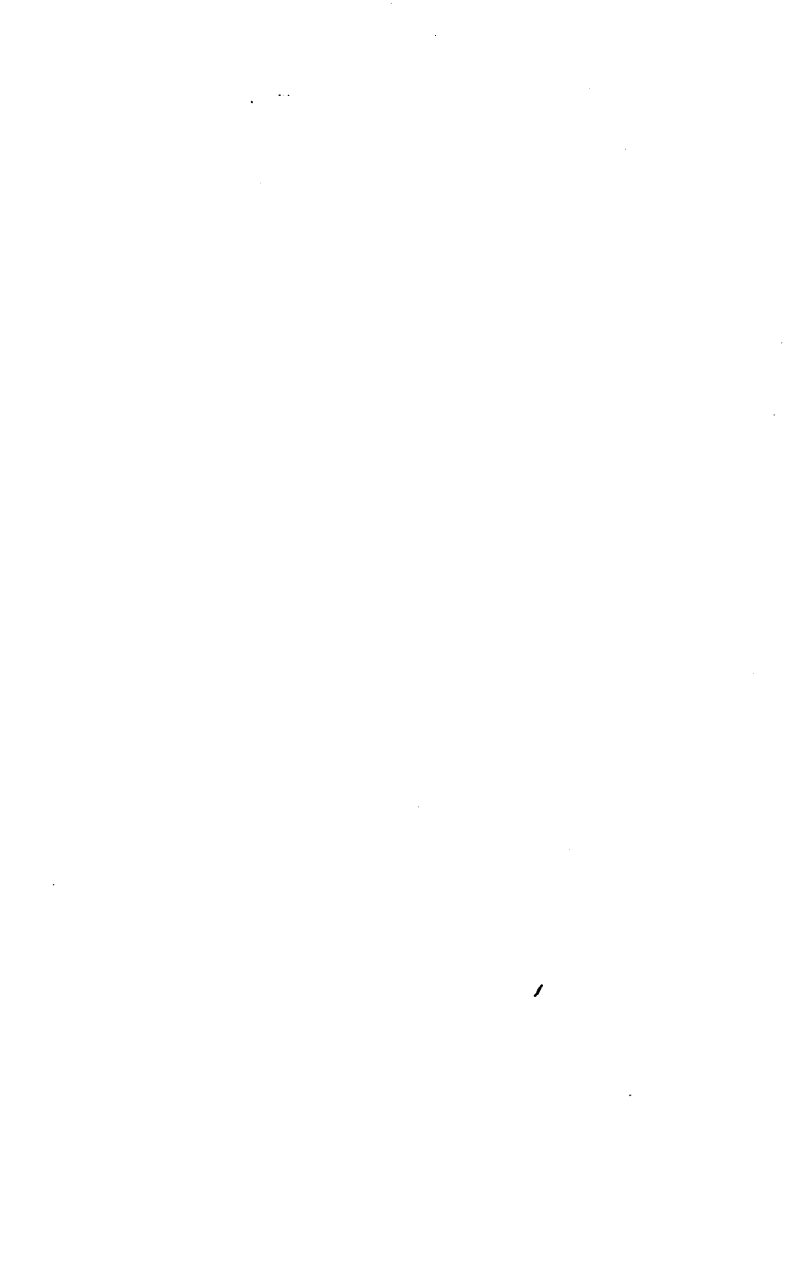
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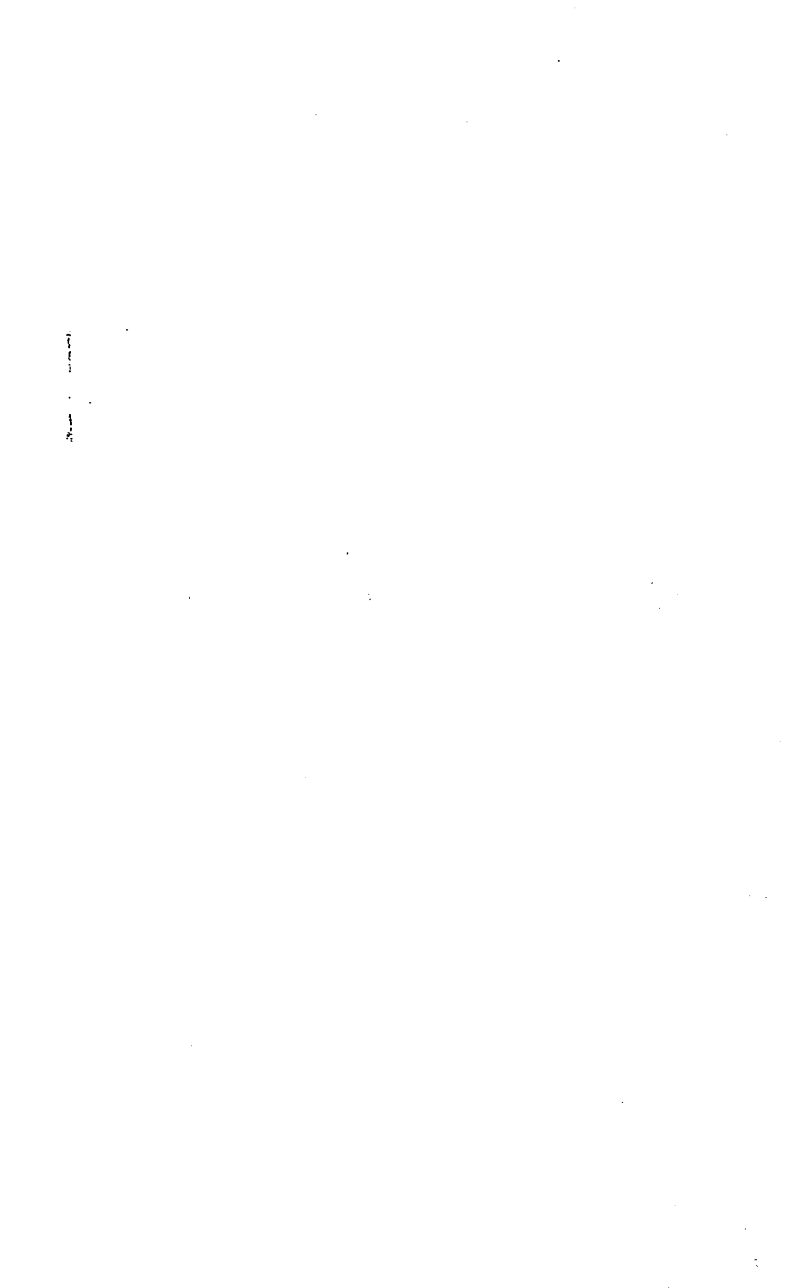
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## **ROMAN CHRISTIANITY IN LATIN AMERICA**



# ROMAN CHRISTIANITY IN LATIN AMERICA

By

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Cooperation in Latin America*



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## Preface

**D**URING the last few years the Foreign Missions Conference of the United States and Canada, through its Committee on Missionary Preparation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, has been encouraging the publication of a group of volumes on the Living Religions of the World. It was the purpose to secure a vivid and concrete, yet thoroughly trustworthy, impression of the actual religious values in the every day life of the world's active religions in the regions where each predominates. Each of these volumes was intended to be impressionistic, rather than didactic. It was to give an accurate picture, duly explained, of the ways in which one of these large groups of men and women expresses its religious longings and a fair estimate of its inner and outer response to the appeal of its religion, rather than to set forth a technical exposition of each religion as a body of teaching or practise. The volumes are thus introductory in character. The interested reader is shown how to pursue the subject further.

No scheme covering the living religions of the world can avoid the inclusion of that form of Roman Christianity which prevails among the great masses of people in Latin America,—a Romanism so blended with primitive superstition and so lacking in the influences which have developed the progressive Catholicism of North America and Europe out of the medievalism of old Spain and Italy and Portugal. Its own wiser officials would freely admit that it has never had the forces at its command either in numbers or quality to supply all the real religious needs of the Latin-American peoples. Evangelical Christians, therefore, both in North America and in Europe, have not

hesitated to establish missions of their own to aid in meeting the obvious needs of a land and people, superficially religious in the centers of population, but frankly non-religious as regards the bulk of its inhabitants.

The writer of this volume before going to South America served as an instructor in Princeton University, of which he is a graduate. He has spent twenty-seven years in South America as a representative of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. For almost twenty of these years he served as the Principal of the "Instituto Ingles" at Santiago, Chile. His graduates are men of leadership and influence and are to be found in the national Congress and in other positions of importance. For the past seven years, Dr. Browning has been the educational secretary of the Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, which represents practically all the Boards working in that great field. He has travelled repeatedly in most of the Latin American republics, meeting all classes,—working men, business men, educators and political and religious leaders. His standing among the educators of South America is attested by the fact that he has been one of the very few North Americans to receive the coveted degree of Litt.D. from the oldest institution of higher learning in the Western Hemisphere, the ancient University of San Marcos, in Peru.

Dr. Browning has seen Roman Catholicism in Latin America in actual operation in all its phases. While he is constrained to recognise the religious shortcomings of Latin America and to voice some criticisms, his attitude is truly irenic. A Latin friend of his described him as a man "with an Anglo-Saxon mind and a Latin heart." He has been a welcome guest and speaker at nearly every great university in Latin America and at gatherings of educated men. He is peculiarly competent to evaluate the real religious life that prevails in the twenty Latin republics that are our neighbours to the South.

It may seem to the reader as he proceeds that the vol-

ume is a story of social, rather than religious conditions. He must remember that the one is essential to reveal the true character of the other. A Romanism whose influence was conducive to social betterment, intellectual awakening and spiritual growth would call for no comment. It would be what Christendom has a right to expect. That the real state of affairs is otherwise is abundantly indicated herein.

Such a study as this aims to be seems timely. After half a century of missionary activity, Evangelical Christianity is now firmly established in Latin America. During the same time Roman Christianity has also made real advances. While the two are likely always to go their separate ways, they may, as in North America, be mutually helpful and reach a common understanding. That this volume may assist the process by drawing a true portrait of existing religious conditions and by suggesting ways of meeting them is our sincere desire.

THE EDITORS.

*New York City,  
June, 1924.*



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## I

### TYPICAL, SUNDAY SCENES

LATIN AMERICA is classified as a Christian country. The traveller who makes, as so many do, the circuit of its maritime republics, need never be far away from the sound of church bells. The people rate themselves as nominally Roman Catholics. Great masses of the uneducated population are as pagan in their modes of life as were their ancestors who served the Incas, and a large proportion of the educated are avowedly atheistic and hostile to the Church. To understand the current religious life of the republics under study requires a careful appraisal of the many elements which have fashioned it. So widely do these vary from those which have shaped the religious development of North American peoples, whether Romanists or Protestants, or of those in Europe, that Roman Christianity in Latin America even differs considerably from the Romanism of those other parts of the world. A clearer knowledge of it may be gained from a consideration of its outward manifestations.

#### 1. *Women Wending Their Way to Early Mass.*

A stranger spending a Sunday in the average Latin American city or large town, especially in the countries that lie in the tropics or border on them, who takes a stroll early abroad in the streets, would see large numbers of well-dressed women wending their way along the principal streets and avenues, evidently imbued with a common purpose and on their way to a common goal.

In some capital cities, as in Santiago de Chile, every woman would be dressed in black, the head and upper

part of the body covered with a light clinging garment, gracefully draped about the face and alluringly fastened under the chin, and falling in loose and flowing folds below the waist of the wearer. This article of dress is the *manto*. Inasmuch as hats are forbidden in a Roman Catholic church in Chile, and yet, in a strictly literal interpretation of Scripture it is decreed that the head of a woman must be covered, the *manto* is worn by women of all social classes when attending mass. These long lines of black-robed figures are women, generally of the upper social strata, who have left their homes at an early hour for the purpose of complying with their religious obligations. When the mass is over they return in the same manner to their homes, quietly, with all decorum, as befits the spirit of the day and hour.

In some cities, as in Lima, Peru, the graceful *mantilla*, more distinctly Spanish in type, which covers only the head, is used; while in Buenos Aires and Montevideo, where the church finds it is less able to dictate the dress that its women may wear, the most modern fashions prevail. Ladies may be seen entering the sacred precincts wearing the latest hats from Paris and London.

But, in any case, the observant traveller will note that with rare exceptions it is only the feminine portion of the population that is thus early astir and intent on the fulfillment of religious duties. He will see very few men. He might even carry away the impression, should he leave the city before midday, that the country had been visited by a particularly disastrous civil war which had carried off large numbers of the males, the women seem so to outnumber the men.

## 2. *The Labouring Man and the Cockpit.*

A little later in the afternoon, however, the male population makes its appearance, beginning with those who may be said to constitute the labouring classes.

In American countries which lie within the tropics, in

the *tierra caliente* of the low-lands, cock-fighting is a favourite diversion of the men of the working classes. Cocks of fighting pedigree are carefully trained for the ring. Nature and careful breeding by man have provided this particular strain of cocks with unusually long, sharp spurs. In addition, their respective owners procure carefully fashioned, curved, razor-like knives and fasten them to the leg of the bird to increase its ability to maim an adversary when they meet in the pit. Thus equipped, the cocks are brought to the rendezvous, each carefully carried in the hollow of the arm of its owner or trainer. No contest for the heavyweight boxing championship of the world further North arouses a more intense interest among the spectators than characterises those who eagerly follow each thrust and retreat of these bleeding champions of the cock-pit.

Sunday, always a holiday, is the day most generally chosen for these exhibitions. The entire day will often pass before an excited crowd breaks up, unless, as sometimes happens, the supply of birds becomes exhausted because so many have been killed.

### 3. *The Races or the Bull-ring.*

In the afternoon of Sunday there are also diversions of a more public character, in which members of all the social classes may share. In some countries, as Chile, the bull-fight has never become popular, and is forbidden by the authorities. But in others, as Peru, which was the seat of the viceroy during the time that Spain held her colonies in the New World, and where Spanish customs still largely prevail, it is as much a national sport as baseball in the United States or cricket in England. Bulls of a peculiarly fierce disposition are imported from the breeders in Spain, or are raised in the country itself, so that the spectacle loses none of its demoralising aspects through having been transplanted to the New World.

The highest officials of the state countenance the spec-

tacle by their presence. Even children of tender age are taken by their parents who think thus to encourage and foster manliness. The *matador* is enthusiastically cheered by the women who are present, as well as by their male escorts. After it is all over, he walks the streets with the haughty mien of a conqueror, acknowledging the flowers showered upon him by the hands of fair women, and receiving the plaudits of the populace, much as a Cæsar celebrated his triumphs in the Eternal City in the days of Rome's greatest power.

In other capitals, horse racing, which is generally prohibited by law on working days, attracts many thousands. Special facilities for betting are provided and a surprising amount of money changes hands. The graduated scale of prices gives opportunity for all to attend, from the President of the Republic to the most humble workingman. These race courses, like the lotteries, pay a certain percentage of their gains to the municipality for the support of hospitals and other institutions of charity. This enables many persons, especially foreigners, to offer a sop to conscience when they bet on the outcome of a race or buy a ticket in the weekly drawing of the lottery.

#### 4. *The Cafés and Clubs.*

When the entertainment of the afternoon is over, the ladies return home, or make their round of social calls. The men congregate in the cafés and clubs and may not return to their homes until a very late hour of the night. During the summer months or in the cities of the tropics, thousands of men sit about small tables that are arranged, as in Paris and other European cities, on the sidewalks in front of the cafés. There they drink coffee and discuss the events of the day or politics. As a rule, only coffee or tea or "soft drinks" will be taken by these small groups of individuals. In the clubs frequented by men of wealth and leisure, drinks of a more fiery character may be freely ordered; yet one seldom sees a gentleman of the upper

classes under the influence of liquor. The drinking is generally confined to light wines; the brandies and whiskeys which made the American saloon infamous are in less demand. Men in the humbler walks of life, however, often congregate in drinking places where indulgence in the fiery native drinks is a prolific cause of quarrels and bloodshed. Many become so incapacitated through intoxication that they cannot do their day's work on Monday, or for even a longer time, and yet this drunken Sunday orgy is repeated by them week after week.

#### 5. *The Reaction During the Week.*

Many women attend mass during the week, some of them with unflinching regularity. Roman Catholic churches are always open, so that those who desire may enter and remain as long as they wish, in meditation or prayer.

Although comparatively few men attend the services of the church at any time, yet among this minority one may find some of the most cultured gentlemen of Latin America. These men are not ashamed to confess their loyalty to their church and are faithful in their compliances with all its ordinances and obligations. Attendance on church services and the fulfillment of its prescribed ordinances, however, are unfortunately too often altogether unrelated with life. It seems difficult for them to make a vital connection between the performance of stated ritualistic duties and the problems of every day life in a world of temptation and constant stress. From the satisfactory conclusion of the one, no inspiration is carried over into the tasks of the other. Hence it is easy for them to content themselves with attendance on the stated church services as a fulfillment of all their Christian obligations, and then each goes his own way in his daily life. This tendency is not limited to members of the Roman Communion; Evangelicals have their full share of such adherents. Yet religion in Latin America has such a pronounced tendency toward formalism that it impresses the onlooker as characteristic.



## II

### THE PRESENT A LEGACY FROM THE PAST

TO UNDERSTAND more fully present conditions in Latin America, in both church and state, one must hark back four hundred years to the time of the conquest of these lands by Spain, and note the kind of men who stamped their character and their habits upon these peoples.

No one will deny that the early part of the sixteenth century marked a period of very high culture in Spain. The universities of Salamanca and Alcala were then at the height of their power and their fame had gone throughout all the countries of Europe. But before the end of this century the Inquisition, which was organised to restore Catholicism, and became one of the principal instruments of the Counter-reformation, had so weakened and impoverished the fundamental human instincts of the Spanish people as to change them into "sombre fanatics, sunk in ignorance and superstition, and retaining hardly a trace of their former buoyance and healthy independence."<sup>1</sup>

Militant forms of religion had long been prevalent in the life of Europe and particularly in that of Spain. The very year that witnessed the conquest of Granada and the discovery of America, saw, also, the expulsion of 100,000 Jews from the peninsula and the forced conversion of many thousands of others. A few years later the Moors also fell under condemnation and were forced to accept Christianity or emigrate from the Spanish dominions. Spain thus came to be looked upon as the favourite daughter of the Papacy, divinely called to carry out the policy of the Pope in all the world.

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<sup>1</sup> See Inge, *Christian Mysticism*.

Very naturally, this same spirit of cruel persecution projected itself into the colonies. Every effort was made to exclude those who were not thoroughly proved Roman Catholics. Adventure and an insatiable appetite for gold were powerful motives in this colonisation; but the earnest desire to extend his peculiar religious program to the new world was equally dear to the heart of every subject of the Catholic kings of Spain.

Therefore, when Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of the Western Hemisphere; Hernando Cortés, the conqueror of Montezuma; and Francisco Pizarro, the despoiler and assassin of Atahualpa, set out to follow the trail of the setting sun across a troubled sea, in order to set up the standards of the Catholic kings of Spain on these far off and unknown shores, the Church came with them. They flung to the breeze, not only the colours of Castilla and Aragón, but also those of the supreme head of the church in their day. The caravels that carried Columbus and his little group toward the Western World bore upon their sails the Christian cross, and this example was imitated by the *conquistadores* who came after him. The principal standard of Cortés was of black velvet, embroidered with gold, emblazoned with a red cross amidst flames of blue and white, with this motto in Latin,—“*Friends, let us follow the cross, and under this sign, if we have faith, we shall conquer.*” The sacred emblem was worn even on the arms of those who bore in their hearts little pity for the peoples whom they brought under subjection. The sword and the crucifix were emblems of a new and terrible power which neither Aztec nor Inca could understand or successfully resist.

### 1. *The Character of the Priesthood During the Conquest.*

The first representatives of the clergy were, for the most part, Franciscan or Dominican monks; later these were largely superseded by the Jesuits. Those who came during the rule of Spain had been trained in the harsh

school of the time, in the methods of the Duke of Alba and Cardinal Cisneros, and they gave short shrift to all persons who dared differ from them in matters of dogma.

Moreover, since their work was carried on so far from Rome or Spain, and under conditions that interfered sorely with a very strict observance of their vows, it was not strange that many of them succumbed to the pleasures of the flesh. But these priests were always faithful churchmen, sustained by an unswerving belief in the righteousness of their cause. They looked on themselves as crusaders, engaged in a holy warfare, sent forth to take possession of an unknown world that its inhabitants might come under the sway of the leader of the Christian faith.

It is true that in the first, and possibly even in the second, generation there were a number of the clergy prominent for their high culture who looked with sympathy upon the Indian population. This is the explanation of the fact that during the first fifty years after the discovery and conquest, a great number of schools, colleges and universities were founded, in which instruction was given to both Indians and whites. Printing presses were also established in which a great many tracts were printed in the dialects of the Indians for distribution among these unfortunates.

In this connection, three names stand out with peculiar brilliance: Bartolomé de las Casas, a member of the Dominican order, who is remembered in the pages of history because of his resolute defense of the red races against the tyranny of the whites; Buenaventura Boil, better known under the name of "Montilinea, the friend of the Indians"; and Zumarraga, the first archbishop of Mexico.

## 2. *This Character but Little Changed During the Succeeding Centuries.*

Unfortunately, the centuries immediately succeeding the Conquest saw but little improvement in the general

character of the priesthood. Recruits were, for the most part, brought from the monasteries of Spain and Portugal, where obscurantism reigned supreme. Few of those who came to the colonies of the New World found their interests reaching beyond the enrichment of their own orders and the gratification of their own desires and passions. All interest in standing up for the rights of the aborigines disappeared and the native was looked upon as a mere helot, a hewer of wood and a drawer of water, with no more claim to consideration than the dumb animals with which he was compelled to live.

This spirit of intolerance predominating among the clergy, was in complete accord with the attitude of the times. It was not strange, therefore, that a branch of the Holy Inquisition should be set up in the Western World in order to hold more strictly to the faith the peoples who lived in the territories there over which Spain ruled. This was accomplished in 1569. In the following year, the first Grand Inquisitor to tread the free soil of America made his triumphal entry into Lima.

### 3. *The Holy Inquisition in America.*

In Lima alone, before the Inquisition was finally abolished in 1813, some sixty men and women had been burned alive, and an almost incredible number had suffered pains and tortures scarcely less horrible. Similar scenes had been enacted in other centers, as in the walled city of Cartagena. There is no exact record of the total number of those who suffered death and torture before the Holy Office was abolished. In Europe with the conclusion of its work there came, also, a reaction against its principles, largely due to Protestant influence in nearby countries. Not so in Latin America, which has remained the peculiar and exclusive territory of the church of Rome, so that, even until the present time, the inquisitorial spirit is strong among the hierarchy. Especially is

this so in some of the more backward countries along the Spanish Main, in Central America and on the West Coast of South America.

Unaffected by the passing years, Romanism in these lands has remained the depository of the traditions and superstitions, the hatred and the intolerance of mediæval Christianity. There are not lacking among its partisans those who would gladly return to the bloody methods of the Middle Ages and prevent by rack and flame the entrance and spread of ideas and teaching that do not completely harmonise with their own. A fellow traveller, a priest of Rome, once said to the writer, on a steamer on one of the rivers in the far interior of South America,—“If I had my way, you would never reach your destination, and all those whom you are going to visit would be quickly disposed of.”

It is true that not all Latin-American priests show this spirit of intolerance, but those who do are numerous enough to wield a decided influence. Latin-American peoples have thereby had their spiritual life narrowed in a way which will persist until they have found out how to rid themselves of this intolerance.

Intolerance and persecution it must be kept in mind, as manifested in Latin America, are Spanish in their essence, rather than indigenous to the soil. The typical native, both the créole and the Indian, is a kindly individual.

#### 4. *The Character of the Priesthood Improves as Nationals Enter It.*

Fortunately in these later years, as the countries of Latin America are being brought into closer contact with other and more progressive nations, a liberal spirit on matters of religion has been strengthened; foreign priests no longer find the warm welcome that was formerly given them. In some countries, as Ecuador and Mexico, the Government has forbidden the entrance of any ecclesiastic not a native of the country. Fre-

quently in such countries the foreign priest has now become an object of suspicion, even among many of those of his own faith.

Consequently, more and more recruits for the work of the priesthood consist of young Latin Americans who are republican in politics and more liberal in religious matters, and whose education necessarily is to some degree influenced by their surroundings. Some of these young clergymen visit the United States, a few of them to earn a higher degree in one of our universities. There they mingle with North American students and, by the very force of the circumstances in which they find themselves, are liberalised in their thinking and acquire a more generous attitude toward those who belong to other communions. When such men return to their own countries to exercise their priestly functions, they are likely to influence their fellow priests, and their Church in general, in favour of modern thinking and acting.

#### 5. *The Present Situation is Largely a Result of a Lack of Friendly Emulation.*

All faithful Roman Catholics denounce the great variety of sects among Protestants as an evidence of weakness and lack of definiteness in Christian faith and practice. But only those who are most fanatical would claim that their monopoly of the field in the absence of a friendly rivalry in religious teaching in Latin America has been an unmixed blessing. For practically four centuries, Roman Christianity has worked by itself in all this great area, and the results in the formation of Christian character can not cheer even the most optimistic. One of their own priests has said:—

“I do not think that the Church, in any case, reaches more than ten percent. of the people, and in many cases this is saying too much. The Church has a hold, but the grip is that of a dead hand, only the people do not yet realise that the hand is dead. But there is no life in the grip and it only needs a

vigorous effort on the part of the missionaries massed in number at some strategic point, to loosen the grip. I can not say too often that the Church here is dead, and none know it better than the priests themselves.”<sup>1</sup>

Yet, we dare not be too critical in considering this and similar statements, as well as the patent facts in the case. Possibly any one of the great evangelical bodies, if left for such a length of time in full control of this great extent of territory, with an overwhelming population of ignorant and pagan tribes of Indians, without any of the kindly yet keen emulation which has kept all the various units of the Christian community in the United States up to the mark, might have failed to maintain its high standards of spirituality or even have deteriorated in the enforcement of commonly recognised codes of morality.

Not only must the spirit of the times be kept in mind in explaining the failure of Latin America to attain to a pure form of active Christianity, but also, the isolation of that whole continent from the great currents of religious reform that swept over Europe and eventually carried to the far off shores of North America, Roman Catholic representatives of a totally different interpretation of the Christian message. Even the Catholic revival, a reaction which took place early in the nineteenth century, scarcely affected the Roman Church in Latin America. At best it may be said that, in its spirit and organisation, Roman Catholicism in Latin America is still practically what it was in Spain and Portugal in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, except as it has been brought into contact with the Evangelical movement.

#### 6. *The Present a Stage in an Evolution Toward Higher Standards.*

As has happened in other parts of the world, the extent to which the work of the Evangelical missions is making

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted by R. E. Speer, in *South American Problems*, p. 189.

its way into public favour is reacting to the improvement of the methods employed by Roman Catholics. It may be said, therefore, that the present marks a transition stage in the development of Roman Catholicism in Latin America, and that its evolution is toward the standards recognised and the methods employed by it in such European countries as France, Bavaria, and Rhenish Prussia, where it holds a high place in the world of thought and conduct.

Since the coming of Evangelical missionaries, and largely due to their influence, many advances in religious and civic freedom have taken place. When the Rev. David Trumbull, the first Evangelical missionary to Chile, disembarked in 1845, he found that there was no liberty of worship accorded by the constitution of the republic, no civil marriage and no civil cemetery. The only worship permitted was that of the official Church, the only legal marriage ceremony was that which was performed by one of its priests, and only those who confessed communion in that Church could be buried in consecrated ground. He soon began to plan for the reform of these laws and give himself to the work of creating public sympathy for the proposed legislation. Before his death, he had the satisfaction of seeing the cemeteries open to the dead of any faith, or of none, of knowing that the civil marriage ceremony had taken precedence over that of the official Church; and that through a liberal interpretation of the constitution, what was practically liberty of worship and conscience had been secured.

Largely as a result of the liberalising influence of the Evangelical missions there are now but few places in Latin America in which the missionary cannot give his message with the utmost freedom and with no fear of serious persecution. Liberty of worship has been secured in all countries, if not by constitutional changes at least through the protection afforded the missionary by the representatives of liberal governments. In a number of republics, as in Uruguay, the Roman Church has been



completely disestablished. Civil marriage laws now make possible the celebration of this rite without the intervention of a priest; civil cemeteries are open to the dead of all faiths, or those of none, and a better understanding is in course of formation between Roman Catholics and Evangelicals.

There is reason to believe that the majority of the intelligent Roman Catholic citizens, while still remaining loyal to their religion and the authorities of their Church, would oppose any suggestion of a return to the narrow and oppressive legislation of past years which gave the priests almost supreme power, not only in matters of religion, but also in the civil and social life of the people. Having experienced the advantages of religious toleration and witnessed its beneficent influence in private and public life, few have any desire to return to the arid past.

### III

## THE EXISTING SITUATION

ALTHOUGH marked changes have taken place in the attitude of Roman Christianity in Latin America toward the problems with which it is particularly concerned, and while the curve in the line of these changes has, on the whole, been upward, the present situation is still very considerably affected by past conditions. This evil inheritance is particularly noted in the educational systems and methods of the majority of Latin-American countries, in the economic conditions that prevail, and in the religious life and practices of the people.

#### 1. *In Education.*

(a) *The Upper Social Classes Are Favoured.*—In every Latin-American republic a certain small section of the population, mainly found in the Capital, is as highly cultured as any similar group in any other city or country of the world. Legislation is always in the control of representatives of this group, and it would be contrary to all experience in other lands to expect them to enact laws unfavourable to their own interests.

Public instruction, for example, is, in theory, both free and compulsory in most of the republics. In practice, only a minority of the population is literate. The proportion of illiterates runs as high as 90% in Colombia, Venezuela and some of the Central American republics, for instance, and drops only to 38.8 in the most advanced. In spite of this unfavourable showing, as compared with other countries, but little interest is manifested by the upper classes in bettering it. Now and then a legislator or a writer declaims against this condition of affairs with-

out result. One such writer, a Brazilian, has recently exclaimed:

"The great mass of our people present the saddest state of illiteracy. It is not erroneous to calculate that more than 80% of our fellow citizens are not able even to read or write. This percentage is so excessive, so deplorable, placing us in a position so greatly inferior to other cultured nations of America and the world, that one of our distinguished men has recently proposed to change our name from Brazil to *Analphabetlandia*,—the land of illiterates."

In most of the cities reasonable provision is made for the instruction of the children of school age, but in the country districts, the home of the bulk of the humbler classes, school privileges are woefully lacking. Even in the cities, the child of the working man must begin to earn his living so early that the parents, themselves illiterates, will not submit to the sacrifices necessary to keep them in school. The wealthy classes are able to keep their children in school as long as they may wish, for, if government schools are lacking or are unsatisfactory, they may place them in private institutions or provide instruction in the home.

(b) *The Education Provided is Cultural Rather Than Practical*.—Generally, the methods established by the teaching monks during the rule of Spain and Portugal have prevailed until the present time. In consequence, and in consonance with the Latin temperament, professional training very largely predominates over that which is practical. The republics to the far South, especially Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, have broken with tradition and adopted modern courses of study and methods of instruction; but in those farther North, the influence of past centuries lingers on in ways difficult to overcome. One of the professors in the University of San Marcos, in Lima, Peru, is quoted as having said:

"We still maintain the same ornamental and literary education which the Spanish Government implanted in South

America for political purposes, instead of introducing intellectual training capable of advancing material well-being. It gives brilliancy to cultured minds, but does not produce practical intelligence. It can amuse the leisure hours of the rich, but does not teach the poor how to work. We are a people possessed of the same mania for speaking and writing as old and decadent nations. We look with horror upon active professions which demand energy and the spirit of struggle. Few of us are willing to endure the hardships of mining, or incur the risks and cares of commerce and trade. Instead, we like tranquillity and security, the semi-repose of public office, and the literary professions on which the public opinion of our society puts a premium. Fathers of families like to see their sons lawyers, doctors, office-holders, literati and professors. Peru, like China, is the promised land of literati and functionaries." (Report of U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1908. Ch. V.)

(c) *The Attitude of Professors Toward Religion.*—In open and pardonable revolt against the only type of Christianity known to them, many of these men have swung to the other extreme of agnosticism, Positivism or atheism, and boldly endeavour to carry their students with them in their thinking. It is not unusual to hear the declaration that God is a myth and religion a man-made affair. A professor in one of the law schools of Brazil is quoted as having said to his students :

"The Catholic faith is dead. There is no longer confidence in Christian dogma. The supernatural has been banished from the domain of science. The conquests of philosophy have done away with the old preconceptions of spirituality. Astronomy with La Place has invaded the heavenly fields, and in all celestial space there has not been found a Kingdom for your God. We are in the realm of realism. The reason meditates not on theological principles, but upon facts furnished by experience. God is a myth. He has no reality. He is not an object of science. Men invented gods and God that the world might be ruled. . . . The simple spirit refrains from all criticisms and accepts the idea of God without resistance. The cultured spirit repels the idea in virtue of its inherent contradictions."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by R. E. Speer, in *South American Problems*, pp. 93-94.

(d) *The Attitude of Students Toward Religion.*—Students generally are apt to accept the teaching of their instructors on matters of faith with little or no independent investigation on their own part; hence it follows that a very large majority of those who are in the secondary schools and universities of Latin America have no interest in religion.

One of the most experienced Secretaries of the Young Men's Christian Association in South America, who knows thoroughly the student situation, has said, referring to one of the largest universities in Latin America:

"The National University of Buenos Aires has a student body of over four thousand young men of the influential classes of the Argentine Republic. . . . As regards religion, I would say that not over ten percent. of them are more than nominally identified with Roman Catholicism, which is the State religion. Another ten percent. take a hostile attitude towards the Roman Church. The hostility does not mean, however, that there is any sympathy with Protestantism in the best sense of the word. They are in sympathy with a Protestantism that protests, but they have no contact with Evangelical Christianity. Christianity and Romanism, indeed, mean to them one and the same thing. The great mass of students are indifferent, never having given any thought to religious questions. They believe in nothing."<sup>1</sup>

The enrollment of the University mentioned has doubled since these lines were written, but the percentages suggested would probably still hold good. Any change would not be in favour of any form of religion, and the same may be said of practically all of the great universities and the various technical schools of Latin America.

In a recent visit to the University of Cuzco, Peru, the writer was told by one of the students that, as a rough estimate, it could be stated one percent of the student body should be classed as actively Catholic; one percent actively Protestant; eight percent favourable to Catholicism; twenty percent favourable to Protestantism; and

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<sup>1</sup> C. J. Ewald, *The Student World*, January, 1909.

seventy percent as entirely indifferent to all forms of religious thought.

(e) *A Reaction Against This Moral Indifference.*—In the face of this great indifference to religion, or the unveiled opposition to the official church, there are not lacking those, among both professors and students, who regret the present situation and hunger for a change. Students in particular, are beginning to realise that their preparation for their life work is not complete, unless they obtain an outfit of moral convictions, and they are asking for instruction along ethical lines. One of them recently voiced his own sense of this lack, in what we would call his Commencement oration, and he represents a growing class in the universities. In words full of sadness and regret, he spoke out his feeling of loneliness and moral isolation in this address, in which he said:

“There is a universal profession,—that of being a man. To be a man is the final end of every human creature. To form men is the primary function of the university. And yet, now admitted to our professions, we say farewell to the scene of our labours in the class-room with the bitterness of spirit which comes from being obliged to acknowledge that we have received no such instruction. Masters of a world of ideas, we are still wandering in search of a moral ideal. In our march toward the Unknown, will our gross natural instincts be a sure guide? Although we are destined to reap an abundant harvest of good or evil from our contact with others, our teachers have failed to point out to us the ethical end of our personality. Thought is a force, a force that builds up or tears down. In order that ideas may have a constructive social value, it is necessary that they have a healthy and solid orientation. For this reason, I believe, if the university will but place virtue on an equality with science, it will have made its most splendid contribution to man as he sets out on the rough highway of life.”<sup>1</sup>

(f) *The Influence of the Roman Church.*—It would be unfair and absurd to claim that the present situation among the professors and students of the schools and

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<sup>1</sup> As quoted in “La Manana,” Montevideo, February 1st, 1921.

universities of Latin America is altogether due to the influence of the Roman Church. There is a regrettable tendency of the same sort in the lands where the Evangelical churches are strongest, for youth and science are ever prone to question the Infinite. Yet no unprejudiced observer, who has really studied the situation, could fail to agree that back of all the present religious unrest among the intellectual classes of Latin America, lies deep distrust of the only expression of Christianity with which they have been familiar. Obscurantism has been greater in Latin-American lands, even than in Italy, Spain, and Portugal, where the great mass of the people retain a certain affection for the church, even when they do not yield blind obedience to it.

## *2. In Political and Economic Conditions.*

(a) *The Rule of the Oligarchs.*—So thoroughly did both state and church in the old days imbue the colonists with the spirit of submissiveness to monarchic authority, that the citizens of the republics established more than one hundred years ago, have not yet been able to establish true democracies. In one or two of the countries farthest south, it may be said that the government is of the people and for the people, and by representatives of the people, regardless of social distinctions and classes. The others are ruled by a small group, although the government is republican in name and form. The highest offices have a way of falling to members of certain families, even through successive generations, that is hardly consonant with the spirit of genuine democracy. For example, a lady who recently died, in one of the countries on the west coast of South America, had been the daughter, the sister and the wife of a president of the republic, and her own son, a rising politician, may also dream of attaining the headship of the state. Where there is a large Indian population, the whites are in complete control, the native children of the soil having no part whatever in making

or executing the laws. It must be remembered that in some of these countries the large majority of the inhabitants are in no sense fitted to be responsible citizens of a republic, and it may be as well that a few of the better prepared are ready and willing to hold the reins of government.

Uruguay, Argentina, and Brazil are republics, in fact as well as form. In the first and last, the Roman Church has been disestablished; and in Argentina it is looked upon as a mere social influence to be let alone as long as it does not interfere with matters of State. The evolution of government has seemed to be from the monarchy to the oligarchy, and thence to democracy, each change resisted by the Church, whose temporal power is weakened as the evolution is partially or wholly effected.

(b) *Patron and Peon*.—In the same way, in the more intimate relations of employer and employed, the respect for authority, instilled through centuries of oppression, leads the labourer to yield a blind obedience. His condition is but little, if any, above that of the helot in ancient Greece or the serf of the Middle Ages. This is particularly true on the great landed estates of the interior, where successive generations live and die, illiterate and with no religious instruction beyond that imparted by the priests in an occasional "mission."

"The peón gets ten cents a day, if he works, but is charged twenty cents for each boon day he fails to work. For what he buys through his patrón, he pays double. If he is in the way of getting out of debt, the timely present of a couple of bottles of aguardiente will make him drunk, and in this expansive mood he may be induced to 'buy' enough goods to plunge him again in the quagmire of debt. In a court of law, the master's ledger always outweighs the word of the peón. As regards the free peóns, the masters are too shrewd to bid against one another for their services, which would be a violation of class ethics. Just as with us it is wrong for one lady to 'steal' the domestic of another by offering her more wages."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E. A. Ross, *South of Panama*, p. 149.



In this economic and social situation the Latin-American priests have resisted the introduction of schools, until obliged to yield, in some cases, through the competition of the Evangelical missionaries, and then have limited the instruction given to the merest elementals. What these authorities have worked for in common with the land owner, is to keep intact that complete and supine submission, which is not so readily yielded by those who have learned to read and gain a slight knowledge of conditions other than their own.

(c) *Industrial Unrest*.—In spite of the long success of the attempts of the rich to keep the poor in subjection, there are not lacking evidences of discontent, which, in many cases have been manifested in strikes or in attempted revolutions. In Santiago de Chile, not many years ago, a mob took advantage of the absence of the troops on their annual manoeuvres and ruthlessly destroyed much property. It was prevented from sacking the city and butchering many of its inhabitants only by the return of the troops, which were rushed back in special trains.

Labour unions have recently developed great organised strength. They exercise unusual power in the larger cities and at present use it recklessly. Strikes are often called for the most insignificant reason. In 1920, there were over two hundred strikes in Buenos Aires, alone, involving almost 135,000 workmen.

In all such movements of the humble classes against those whom they consider their oppressors, the Church is singled out as the object of special hatred. Rightly or wrongly, the feeling exists that the Church has always been leagued with the oppressor of the working class, and it will take many years of devoted work on the part of its representatives today to overcome this belief.

(d) *Growing Pains Incident to Any Social Struggle to Break with the Past*.—With the coming of immigrants from Europe, many of whom are intelligent and skilled

artisans, and with the introduction of modern machinery in the factories and on the farms, new and unexpected ambitions have taken possession of the workingmen and the farm-labourers. They have come to suspect that the future may hold better things in store for them, and, particularly, for their children. This increasing tendency to think and act for themselves rather than allow themselves to be treated as mere animals is full of promise for the future of the labouring class in Latin America.

The civic and social education of the working classes offers a great opportunity for the Evangelical Church. Since they have practically rejected the only form of Christianity to which they have been accustomed, these workers are apt, in the stress of their surge toward better living conditions and larger political rights, to yield themselves to sheer infidelity or atheism. The great danger of Latin America today is this tendency to ignore or despise religion in all its forms.

### 3. *In the Social Code.*

(a) *It Protects Men But Not Women.*—In no phase of present day life in Latin America is the impact of the past so acutely felt, as in the influence of its social code on women. The members of the armed forces of Spain and Portugal which overran these Western lands in missions of conquest and subjugation were men who had formed but few family ties in the home land. When the native tribes succumbed to the shock of the Spanish or Portuguese arms, the victorious invaders appropriated to themselves the women of the conquered sons of the soil. This example was zealously imitated by the successive hordes of adventurers who followed as immigrants in the wake of the conquerors. The social standards which were thus set up have largely determined the position of lower class women until the present day. In the country districts, in particular, few of the girls of the working class reach a marriageable age without experiencing motherhood. On

the great estates, the daughter of the *peon* is looked upon as lawful prey for the sons of the *patron*. The large number of Indian women in some countries, who are generally of easy virtue, and the excess of females over the males in others, due to civil wars, have also contributed to the weakening of any inherited ideas of virtue. No better summing up of the situation could be given than is found in an address delivered by a leading physician of Uruguay at the Second American Congress on Child Welfare, held in Montevideo, in 1919. Among other things, speaking of child abandonment, he said:

"With comparative frequency I have noted among women, who were neither ignorant nor indigent, another cause of abandonment. Seduced by individuals of a higher social standing, which precluded all hope of legal reparation, as by marriage or by the legitimation of the child, or, it may be, by those impudent specimens who abound in country districts, and who record their conquests with the same satisfaction that a hunter computes the number of pieces that have fallen under his gun, maternity brings with it such a feeling of repulsion and rebellion that the child inherits the hatred engendered in the mother."<sup>1</sup>

The above makes it hardly necessary to say that the social organisation centers very largely around the man.

"The husband owes his wife protection, while she owes him obedience. He is legally responsible for her acts, though not for her crimes. She has no voice as to her place of residence, but is bound to follow him, whatever be the danger to her health, happiness or even life.

"Without her husband's consent, she cannot bring a lawsuit, make or dissolve a contract, forgive a debt, take or reject a gift, inheritance or legacy, be executrix, or buy, alienate or mortgage productive property. If the husband should object, even a deserted wife may not pawn her personal jewels to buy herself bread, nor may she take employment as a servant, needle woman, mill operative, or stenographer. . . . The illegitimate child may start an

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Augusto Turenne, *Prophylaxis of the Abandonment of the Child*, pp. 7-8.

inquiry to find out who his mother was, but not to ascertain who his father was, because this would threaten the peace of the home."<sup>1</sup>

(b) *Advances Made by Feminist Forces.*—The Latin American woman is essentially a home-maker. When trouble has come, she has borne it patiently and uncomplainingly, with no thought of securing redress before the law or society.

Of late years, however, due in part to the influence of visiting foreigners and travel abroad in the United States and Europe, feminist societies of different kinds have been formed in almost every country of Latin America, whose members maintain a constant and helpful contact with women of other lands. In Peru, for example, one of the most conservative countries of Latin America, a society has been formed to advocate the following program:

1. Opportunity for an ample culture which will enable women to carry out efficaciously their mission.
2. Since the first need of a state is to develop motherhood, domestic sciences should constitute the basis of feminine education.
3. The dignifying of work for women.
4. The defense of her rights.
5. The establishment of equality of man and woman before the courts and in matrimony.
6. A campaign against all social vices.
7. A stimulation of the performance of social and altruistic service.
8. Adhesion to movements for peace and idealism.

In some of the most advanced countries such as Uruguay, there are divorce laws, and other states, even conservative Peru, are following this example, although such legislation is always bitterly opposed by the Church. The entrance of the Young Women's Christian Association into some of the countries of South America will do much toward imparting to the younger women a higher realization of their responsibilities and opportunities.

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<sup>1</sup> E. A. Ross, *South of Panama*, pp. 201-202.

Argentina has gone further than any other country in the matter of women's clubs and work. The "National Council of Women" is a real power in the moulding of public opinion and in securing legislation. Among the demands of the Council are the following:

1. The repeal of all laws which establish a legal difference between the sexes.
2. The right of women to hold public office, and, particularly, to be members of the national and regional Educational Councils.
3. The establishing of special courts for women and children.
4. The enactment of laws for the protection of maternity and for the legitimising of all children.
5. The abolition of all legalised prostitution and of a double standard for the sexes.
6. The equalisation of salaries.
7. The equalisation of political rights.

#### 4. *In the Religious Life.*

(a) *The Women Are Generally Faithful to Their Church.*—The very large majority of the women of Latin America, especially those of the upper and middle classes, are devout and zealous Roman Catholics. Many attend mass regularly, generally at an early hour of the day; not a few make it a practice to attend every day in the year. Most women are also careful to observe the ordinances of their church to the fullest extent of their ability. The word of the priest is absolute law for the most faithful and his influence in the home is superior to all others. Through the confessional he learns the most intimate secrets of each home.

In spite of this close surveillance of her acts, and not because of it, religion is a very strong influence in the life of the average woman. One will find as sweet-tempered, charitably-minded, truly Christian women in Latin America as in any other country of the world, and many of them.

(b) *The Alienation of the Men.*—While the above is

true in regard to the women who show but little inclination to break with the traditions of the past, the exact opposite must be said about the men. Those who belong to the intellectual class are brilliant and attractive and often of the highest honour and ideals. But, as a general rule, and with but few exceptions, they are utterly indifferent to the claims of Christianity. They are seldom hostile to the Church, unless it interferes in politics, but they seem to regard religion as a matter which lies outside their responsibility and concern. It is good for the women and children and the working class, keeping them either occupied or docile, and may be safely left to them. In the minds of the most influential men, religion tends to be classed as a sort of mediæval philosophy which has been tried as a remedy for soul hunger and found wanting and has been consigned to the limbo of useless and worn-out theories. For this attitude of mind the Roman Church itself is responsible. From the beginning of its power in Latin American countries it has laid undue stress on blind assent to the teachings of the Church and on the externalities of worship, working mechanically, as of saving value; and its ministers have been neither models in conduct nor intellectual leaders. The Church has made no effort to interpret religion as something which should transform the daily life or to rouse the soul of the people. It has, in consequence, lost its hold on the conscience of the thinking classes.

One priest is quoted as saying that in Buenos Aires, then a city of a million inhabitants, he did not believe that two hundred men could be found in Church services on a given Sunday. The Archbishop of San Paulo, Brazil, has said:

“Brazil has no longer any faith. Religion is almost extinct here.”

Another writer, referring to the intellectual class of Brazil, says:

"Statesmen, lawyers, physicians, army and navy officials almost to a man, have rejected the historic Christ, and have turned to infidelity and positivism. In one city of 35,000 inhabitants, after careful investigation, only two hundred persons could be found who were in full communion with the Roman Church."<sup>1</sup>

(c) *Mary, Not Her Son, is the Center of Worship.*—A distinctive feature of Roman Catholic worship in all lands is what Evangelicals consider the undue reverence paid to the Virgin Mary. In Latin America this reverence is carried to an extreme not known elsewhere. It is her image which occupies the post of honour on flying buttress or lofty tower; it is her altar which is most gorgeously bedecked, before which the largest number of worshippers bow in prayer. She is represented as womanly human and alive to our weaknesses. She easily forgives. The Son is Judge, as well as Saviour, but yields to the intercession of his mother.

The Breviary is the official prayer book for all the ordained clergymen of the Roman Catholic Church, just as the Missal is the official book used in the offering of the Mass as sacrifice. According to these official texts, only one day in the year is given to the Holy Trinity for a special office of worship, and about seventy to the Virgin Mary, and the Mass celebrated in honour of the Virgin ranks several degrees above that in honour of the Trinity.

One of the catechisms of the Church gives the following directions for her worship:

"Whom should we in particular honour and invoke above the Angels and Saints?"

"Mary, the blessed Virgin, and Mother of God."

"Why should we particularly honour and invoke Mary?"

"1. Because she is the Mother of God, and therefore surpasses the Angels and Saints in Glory.

"2. Because for that very reason her intercession with God is most powerful."

<sup>1</sup> Isaacson, *Rome in Many Lands*, p. 160.

"Should we also honour the images of Jesus Christ and the Saints?"

"Yes, certainly for if even a child honours the likenesses of his parents and a subject the image of his prince, so much the more must we honour the images of our Lord and of his saints."<sup>1</sup>

"Come unto Mary, all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and she will give you rest," are the words placed above the entrance to the church of the Jesuits in Cuzco, Peru, in order to keep them before the eyes of the entering worshippers.

(d) *The Bible Lacking*.—Although the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church seldom fail to claim that their people have free access to the Bible and are urged to read it, real experience in Latin America seems to prove the exact opposite of this statement. Now and then, a zealous priest will be found who earnestly tries to cultivate an interest in the Bible among his parishioners, but such are the exception, and they are not encouraged in their efforts. Bible agents and colporteurs all over Latin America have been persecuted by the priesthood, and even thrown into prison and done to death in order to prevent the circulation of the Scriptures. Outside of the agencies maintained by the Bible Societies and the various Evangelical missions, it is exceedingly difficult, even in the leading cities, to secure a copy of the Bible, or of portions of Scripture, even of the versions that have been authorised by the Roman Church. It may be said, with no exaggeration, that were it not for the work of the Evangelical missionaries in past years, it would be next to impossible to find a copy of the Scriptures in the vernacular in any part of the great region under study.

The settlers of Anglo-Saxon America brought with them not only a heritage of great memories and a religious conviction deep enough to send them into voluntary exile in the midst of the new and distressing conditions that

<sup>1</sup> Deharbe's *Catechism*, p. 180.



prevail in an unknown land, but also that great classic, the English Bible, rendered into our tongue when the English language was a fountain of fresh and invigorating speech. Published almost simultaneously with the establishment of the first permanent English settlement in the New World, it became woven into their lives, and largely shaped their political, ethical, and social organisations. Latin America has never been permitted the inspiration of this Book. "The Magna Charta of the poor and oppressed, the most democratic book in the world" has not been placed in the hands of the people of these lands and they have lost thereby.

The reasons given by Rome for its virulent opposition to the circulation of the Scriptures, whether in Latin America or other parts of the world, may be briefly summarized:

The Church maintains that God reveals his truth in the Holy Scriptures and tradition; we can know the true sense of the Scriptures only from the Church, because the Church alone cannot err in interpreting it. The Bible by itself is not a sufficient rule of faith; but the Bible and tradition, both infallibly interpreted by the Church, are the right rule of faith. Tradition is the unwritten doctrine of the Apostles handed down in the Church from generation to generation, and is contained chiefly in the decrees of the Councils, in the writings of the Fathers, in the acts of the Holy See, and in the words and usages of the Sacred Liturgy. Tradition has the same value as Scripture because, according to the Church, it has been revealed in the same way. Therefore, the circulation of the Bible alone, without notes that have been approved by the Church, is forbidden.

It is well known that the early Fathers of the Christian Church, such as Clement, Justin, Tertullian, Chrysostom, Jerome and Augustine, recommended the reading of the Bible by all classes of the people. But during the Middle Ages, when the Waldensians sprang up in Italy, and the

Albigensians in France, these biblical Christians quoted the Scriptures, especially the New Testament, in support of their own views and in criticism of the abuses and errors of the Vatican. Consequently, the ecclesiastics began to forbid the Bible to the common people. On the other hand, as late as the beginning of the thirteenth century, the founder of the Franciscan order solemnly commended to his brethren the reading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ without notes, and pronounced a curse on all who wanted to insist on publishing commentaries on the Word.

Pope Leo XIII. was considered very liberal minded. Yet, in his bull, "Providentissimus Deus," devoted to the instruction of scholars and teachers of the Bible, he says: "They may understand that God has delivered the Holy Scriptures to the Church and that in reading and making use of His Word they must follow the Church as their guide and their teacher." And again, addressing the same persons, he says: "The sense of the Holy Scriptures cannot anywhere be found incorrupt, outside of the Church."

In consonance with this attitude of its Councils, very naturally the Church opposes the work of the Bible Societies because they distribute versions which it has not authorised; but why does it do so little to put into circulation its own version? It is rather remarkable that there are some eighty Protestant Bible Societies, but not one that has been established and maintained by the Roman Catholics.

The Catholic Encyclopedia states that: "The attitude of the Church toward the Bible societies is one of unmistakable opposition. Believing herself to be the divinely appointed custodian and interpreter of Holy Writ, she cannot, without turning traitor to herself, approve the distribution of scripture, without note or comment. But such distribution would be likewise a violation of one of the first principles of the Catholic faith,—the principle arrived at through observation as well as by revelation of the insufficiency of the scriptures alone to convey to the

general reader a sure knowledge of faith and morals. Consequently, the Council of Trent, in its fourth session, after expressly condemning all interpretations of the sacred texts which contradict the past and present interpretations of the Church, orders the Catholic publishers to see to it that their editions of the Bible have the approval of the bishop."

Leo XII., in his "Ubi Primum," says: "You are aware, Venerable Brothers, that a certain Bible society is impudently spreading throughout the world, which, despising the traditions of the Holy Fathers and the decree of the Council of Trent, is endeavouring to translate, or rather to pervert, the scriptures into the vernacular of all nations. . . . It is to be feared that by false interpretation the Gospel of Christ will become the Gospel of men, or still worse, the Gospel of the Devil."

Pius IX., in "Qui Pluribus," says: "These crafty Bible societies, which renew the ancient guile of heretics, cease not to thrust their Bible upon all men, even on the unlearned,—their Bibles, which have been translated against the laws of the Church, and often contain false explanations of the texts; thus the divine traditions, the teaching of the Fathers and the authority of the Catholic Church are rejected, and everyone in his own way interprets the words of the Gospel."

(e) *A Sense of the Responsibility of Stewardship is Lacking.*—There is no doubt that the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America knows how to secure contributions to its work from both rich and poor; nor can any one question that this knowledge is put into practice. As proof, one has but to note the immense number of churches as well as the monasteries, convents, hospitals, schools, and other institutions that are found in bewildering confusion. Even in the country districts no one can travel far without finding numerous buildings belonging to the Church. It, also, holds title to enormous tracts of land, in many countries, from which it must derive a sub-

stantial income. No matter how seemingly contradictory, it must be insisted, nevertheless, that it has not inculcated among its people a sense of stewardship. Much money is given through fear or in exchange for favours which only the Church can bestow. The giving is largely mechanical, rather than through a deep recognition of the responsibilities of stewardship. The alms given for the erection of hospitals, churches, and other buildings often constitute the good works which, with confession and communion, are the conditions on which the contributors secure indulgences. While the Church may secure great sums of money, the methods by which it is obtained kill the selfless element which is the heart of the principle of stewardship.

(f) *Intellectual Assent, Not Conversion, Demanded by the Church.*—Conversion, as understood by the Evangelical Churches, is not deemed necessary by the Roman Catholic Church. According to the Roman Catholic Church the sacraments of baptism and ordination impress on one an indelible character which will not be blotted out, even in the life to come. Once baptism is administered, says the Roman Catholic, the child and adult remains a Roman Catholic. He may apostatise when he becomes capable of exercising his own judgment, but no matter what his life may have been, the Church may still claim him if she wishes. Nothing but her own ban of excommunication can break the bond which was formed at baptism. Many a man has said to the writer, with the expressive Latin shrug of the shoulders, "I am a Catholic because so baptised; but I have no use for the Church and never go near it."

In addition to baptism, the Church insists on being present on the two other most important occasions of a man's life,—at his marriage and at his death. At marriage, the man will naturally yield to the wishes of the bride. At death he again has no choice. The priest is called in at the last moment, the sacred wafer is administered when he is very often too weak to resist, the

candles are lighted about his bier, and, no matter what his private life may have been, having received the ministrations of the Church, his family is made to believe in his salvation. The divorce between religion and ethical standards of conduct, which actually exists, can probably be traced to the unfortunate substitution of intellectual assent for real conversion. So long as one assents to its doctrines and gives it influence and support, the matter of private conduct does not enter into consideration.

(g) *Romanism is a Philosophy as Well as a Religion.*—Centuries of unenlightened teachings have produced a peculiar type of Romanist mind. Any degree of religious inquiry is at once dubbed a heresy. All investigation is feared and the dictates of the Church are blindly accepted without questioning. The *Index Expurgatorius* eliminates all books and literature that might contaminate the mind of the faithful Catholic, so that his mind is thus preserved intact to the influences of the Church.

The teaching that the Church is the only channel of grace and blessing leads to supineness on the part of the individual. He is dependent on the Church for salvation, since God works through it as through an efficient machine that cannot fail in delivering the tale of goods demanded from it. "God touches human life only from without" is the philosophy of the faithful one, "and whatever of good is accomplished must be by the divine activity completely isolated from the human, and, therefore, not subject to any moral conditions."<sup>1</sup>

"Anyone who would sustain that the Sacraments of the New Testament do not confer grace, *ex opere operato*, that is, by themselves, with no reference to the recipient or the one who administers them, let him be excommunicated." (Council of Trent, Session 7, Canon 8.)

Such paralyzing philosophy is the secret of the religious backwardness of the average Latin American.

<sup>1</sup> Frederick Platt, *Immanence and Christian Thought.*"

(h) *The Evangel of Rome is Sacerdotal and Symbolic.*—Roman Christianity is essentially a sacramentarian religion. The Holy Eucharist is held to be the real body of our Lord, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, under the appearance of bread and wine. On this point, the teaching of the Church is plain, as declared at the Council of Trent, Session 13, Canon 1:

“If any one affirms that the Eucharist does not contain, truly, really, substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of Jesus Christ, and therefore, the complete and absolute Christ himself, let him be excommunicated.”

The worshipper finds it necessary to approach God through images. Not only are the churches of Latin America full of these man-made helps to devotion, but the streets and country lanes have their due proportion of them, before which the simple-minded peasant bows in utter devotion, with the probability that, in most cases, his ideas go but little beyond what he sees before him.

All this produces a pseudo-loyalty to the organisation and makes easy the control of the masses. If it develops a type of piety, it is a piety which lacks initiative or aggressiveness, and it does not develop a strong, virile, up-standing faith.

(i) *Rome is Not Missionary; Witness the Pagan Indians.*—There are no exact statistics of the Indian population of Latin America, but the most careful estimate places the figure at 17,000,000. Of this number a great many are nominally Roman Catholics, although their state of faith is little more than a baptised paganism, in which Christian sacraments are oddly blended with the most grotesque and repulsive native superstitions and observances.

But, far in the interior, especially of South America, there are many tribes that have never been reached with the gospel message. Rome has been busy fortifying herself in the cities and communities of European origin, and

has given little thought to the millions of natives who are today, after more than four hundred years of unlimited opportunity, throughout all this great region, as thoroughly pagan as when Columbus first turned his caravels toward the West and his successors took possession of the continent in the name of the Catholic King and Queen of Spain.

One of the best known missionaries of the "South American Missionary Society," in referring to the work of his Society in the far interior of the continent, has said:

"The Roman Catholic Church at the present time is for practical purposes outside of consideration, so far as solving the problem of the salvation of these tribes is concerned, and, so far as I know, it does not appear likely to attempt the solution. On the borders its representatives are less energetic than at previous periods. To such an extent is this so, that in all my experience our missionaries have never come into collision, nor been brought into contact with them. In vast districts, over wide areas, the Roman Church is not even known, nor have the Indians here any traditions concerning it. We are unquestionably the first and only people who have attempted to reach many of the tribes under discussion, and our chief work has been centered on them. On the borders, chiefly in Bolivia, the Roman Catholic Church has had missions for many years, but it is not extending these and is not reaching the more remote tribes. In the Paraguayan and Bolivian Chacos proper, a region practically unoccupied and to a great extent unexplored, and among the greater number of the Argentine Indians, little is being done."<sup>1</sup>

In the great forests of Brazil there is a population of pagan Indians of which no exact estimate can be made, because no white man has ever explored that region. In Ecuador, on the eastern slopes of the Andes, are a number of tribes,—among them the head-hunters, whose grim trophies may yet be secured in the coast cities,—and in Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia and Peru there is a considerable population of pagans. Pagans are found, also,

<sup>1</sup> W. B. Grubb, *Report of Panama Congress*, Vol. I, p. 97.

along the Atlantic coast of Panama, where we have the San Blas Indians, the Mosquito Coast of Central America and the interior of the republics of Central America, and through Mexico to the Rio Grande.

This attitude of the Church toward the Indian is a throw back from that held by the early conquerors. The character and habits of the early clergy who came with them have been perpetuated to our own times, with little break in continuity; and any important change in the near future is improbable. Much valuable missionary work has been done by the Roman Church in other non-Christian lands, and many of its representatives have willingly gone to their death in defense of the doctrine which they preached. But this missionary spirit has shown itself but slightly in Latin America, where it has had and does have an unusual and unique opportunity. The millions of pagan Indians of today and their descendants of tomorrow seem destined to go down to their graves in ignorance of the gospel unless the Evangelical Churches, scarcely less recreant to their responsibilities, heed their call and prepare to answer it.

Not only is this lack of the evangelistic spirit true of the great interior, among the Indians, but in the more civilised centers and even in the great cities adequate provision for the spiritual care of the people is not provided by the Roman Church.

Paraguay has but eighty-four priests to minister to a population of one million. More than half of these priests are located in the capital, Asunción, which has a population of about 100,000, leaving the others to minister to their 900,000 fellow countrymen scattered over a territory as large as that of New England. In all Bolivia, with three millions of population, in a territory six times as large as New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware, there are but three hundred twenty-eight parish churches, eighty-three of which are reported to be without priests. In the Beni, a large district of Bolivia in the



tropical region of the East, with a population of 50,000, there are but four priests. And the Papal delegate who recently visited this district is quoted as having said that he found: "A territory of 72,000 square kilometers in extent, without a priest and without a church."

On a recent trip to the region of the Sinu River, in Colombia, the writer was told that in this population of 100,000 there are but three priests. In the City of Buenos Aires, with two million inhabitants, there are but thirty-five parochial churches, and, counting all chapels, but one hundred sixteen places of Roman Catholic worship. Philadelphia, with approximately the same population, in addition to seven hundred Protestant churches, is said to have two hundred eighty-five Roman Catholic places of worship. New York City has five hundred thirty, and Brooklyn, alone, with about the population of Buenos Aires, has one hundred twenty churches, or almost three times the number to be found in the southern city.

The above figures are offered as a mere statement of facts and are not to be taken as criticism. Possibly the criticism would fall to the Evangelical churches which have left one single branch of the Christian church to bear alone the responsibility for the evangelisation and Christian education of the teeming millions in Latin America.

(j) *The Spirit of the Inquisition is Still Strong.*—It must not be forgotten that Roman Christianity was brought to Latin America at a time when religious feeling ran high in Europe, and when intolerance was a marked characteristic of all parties. The Roman Church in Spain and Portugal, moreover, was then, as now, in this respect far below its own level in other European countries, especially France and Germany. The priests, particularly those who crossed the seas to the new colonies of the Catholic kings of Spain, were comparatively illiterate and less tolerant than those who came from other countries of Europe. Unfortunately Latin America has continued to receive many others of this obscurantist type, and they

have laboured hard to keep up the traditions of their predecessors. Few native born men of a superior type and preparation have entered the ranks of the clergy, and those recruits from the lower classes of society have been readily influenced by their foreign ecclesiastical superiors.

As has been pointed out above, the spirit of the Middle Ages still runs strong in present day Romanism in Latin America. Evangelical missionaries and Bible agents in all parts of Latin America could make statements showing that this spirit, revengeful and intolerant, is still strong, especially among the priests of foreign birth.

Fortunately not all the clergy are of this type. Some are openly expressing their approval of Evangelical missions, and their hope that, with the aid of the Evangelical movement, the tide towards atheism and agnosticism may be stayed.

One of the best statements from Roman Catholics as to the value of Evangelical mission work in Latin America, was made by a Bishop of that Church, in Chile, during the meeting of the Eucharistic Congress, held in the capital of that country, in 1922. One of the subjects which came up for discussion was, "What shall we do with the Protestants?" A number of those present seemed to be inspired with the spirit of the Holy Office of the Inquisition and their advice was, "*Let us burn them at the stake and get rid of them.*" After a number had spoken in this way, Bishop Edwards, whose name shows that he is a descendant of Anglo-Saxons, said: "Brethren, you may say what you will about the Protestants, but they have three things that we may well learn from them. They have a clergy whose life is beyond reproach, whereas ours is the laughing stock of the whole country. They preach and they practice temperance, and we ought to do the same. They have the open Bible and put it into the hands of their people."<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to know that, as a result of opinions like

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in *All the World*, April, 1923.

the above, which were freely expressed in this Congress, the Roman Catholic Church, in Chile, has prepared an edition of the four Gospels and now offers it for sale by its agents and at a very low price.

As the ranks of the priesthood are renewed by young Latin Americans who grow up under more liberal laws and in a period when their people are in closer contact with other and more advanced nations, the bigotry of the past must gradually disappear, and a spirit of greater liberality take its place. Latin America gains immensely by the fact that the convents and seminaries of Spain and Portugal no longer have a monopoly in the recruiting of the priesthood.

(k) *Rome Does Not Understand the Motive of Evangelical Christianity.*—The hierarchy of the Roman Church, while admitting the success of the missionary work that is carried on by evangelicals, classifies Protestantism and Mohammedanism together as its chief "competitors" and endeavours to explain their success in various ways. Large salaries paid missionaries, who are often charged with being emissaries of a foreign government; the "daring, adventurous, and commanding nature of the Anglo-Saxon race"; the economic prosperity of the Protestant powers; the unquestioned religious fervour of certain of the various sects; the vast educational work carried on from press and pulpit; and the extensive and admirable organisation of missionary activities are credited with the success attained; but that evangelical Christianity has any deep and abiding interest in the salvation of souls would be strenuously denied. In fact, Protestantism, although admitted to be a form of Christianity, a schism from the mother church, is not considered capable of announcing the real gospel, and Protestants themselves constitute a proper field for Roman Catholic missions. One of their writers states that the Society for the Propagation of the Faith has spent on its missions in the United States, since 1822, a little less than \$7,000,000.

(1) *Roman Christianity in Latin America a Peculiar Type.*—It is scarcely necessary to restate here that the form of Roman Christianity common in Latin America is different from that which is known in the United States, Great Britain, and certain countries of Europe, such as France and Germany. In the United States, no one will deny the great services rendered by its clergy, especially in caring for the generally ignorant and often indigent immigrants from Southern Europe. The spirit of liberty in which they have been educated in our institutions of learning does not produce fanatics in religion. Cardinal Gibbons, once Archbishop of Baltimore, has said:

“Fifteen millions of Catholics live their lives in our land with undisturbed belief in the perfect harmony existing between their religion and their duties as American citizens. It never occurs to their minds to question the truth of a belief which all their experience confirms. Love of religion and love of country burn together in their hearts. They love their church as the divine spiritual society set up by Jesus Christ, through which they are brought into a closer communion with God, learn His revealed truth and His holy law, receive the help they need to lead Christian lives and are inspired with the hope of eternal happiness. They love their country with the spontaneous and ardent love of all patriots, because it is their country and the source to them of untold blessings. They prefer its form of government before any other. They admire its institutions and the spirit of its laws. They accept the Constitution without reserve, with no desire, as Catholics, to see it changed in any feature. They can with a clear conscience swear to uphold it. American Catholics rejoice in our separation of Church and State; and I can conceive no combination of circumstances likely to arise which should make a union desirable either to Church or State.”<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, the North American priesthood, as a rule, is drawn from a class of men who differ widely from the priests who come to Latin America from the schools of Southern Europe, both in intellectual preparation and ethical conduct, and their influence on the community has

<sup>1</sup> *The North American Review*, March, 1909.

been salutary and uplifting. These same Roman Catholic Christians in the United States might do much toward the bettering of conditions in Latin America by toning up the priesthood through the placing of chosen representatives in positions of helpful contact. Some of them are lamenting their failure to do this in the past, and do not hesitate to declare themselves on this point. One young lady reports that when certain friends informed the priest in her home town of her intention to go to one of the republics of South America as a Protestant missionary, he simply remarked, "Had we done our duty by South America, it would not be necessary for the Protestants to send missionaries to those peoples."

The striking difference between Roman Christianity in Latin America and that in the United States can be proved by the testimonies and experiences of our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens who have spent any time in these lands. Many of them sever their connection with their Church while abroad; some attend the Protestant Churches of English speech; and not a few declare emphatically that what they have seen of the working of Roman Christianity in Latin America is in no sense typical of their religion.

The writer recalls, among many such people whom he has met while travelling around and across the continent, a young lady who had spent some time in one of the South American countries in the capacity of a trained nurse and was then returning home on the completion of her contract. When asked the direct question, as to her opinion of her Church, as she had seen it in the republic which had been her home for two years, she replied, "I have not seen my Church in South America." In the conversation that followed she explained that she could not accept what she saw as a part of the Church in which she had been reared and which she evidently loved. She had found the priesthood corrupt, and exclaimed, "I would not go to hear one of them say mass; much less would I confess to them; I could not bear to go near them."

The severest condemnation, in many cases, of the situation of Roman Christianity in Latin America has come from the lips of faithful sons and daughters of that same Church, who love it almost as they love their own mothers, and long for its regeneration in these republics of Latin America that will bring its standards and practices there to the same level they occupy in their home land.

When this sentiment becomes more general and the great forces of Roman Christianity awake to a full realisation of their responsibilities and opportunities in Latin America, it is possible that evangelical Christianity may find its work over and be able to begin the transfer of its forces to other fields. This would seem to be a desirable solution of the present problem. But at present the duty of evangelical Christianity in these lands is clear and cannot be left undone.

## IV

### THE APPEAL OF ROME

IN view of the rather distressing situation described above, many readers will very naturally ask, "What, then, is the appeal which Roman Christianity makes to the people of Latin America? How does it maintain a hold on the affections and loyalty of such a large number of the people?"

The first answer that might be made to these questions will at once occur to any student of education. It is well known that the impressions received in childhood are never entirely lost. In the matter of religion, the child will almost invariably follow the teaching of the mother, the girl, in general, during her whole life and the boy, at least, until he thinks for himself. The Latin-American mother is almost invariably a Roman Catholic, under the constant and careful tutelage of her confessor. The boy or girl who is reared under these conditions will receive impressions that can never be entirely obliterated.

The second answer may be found in the fact that the Latin American is undoubtedly more religious by nature, than his more cold-blooded and phlegmatic Anglo-Saxon brother. The Roman Church, through its close union with the autocratic Spanish government, has managed to monopolise, from the time of its arrival among the aborigines of Latin America, all religious teaching. Save for the ragged remains of a rather crass paganism, it furnished the only possible channel for the outward manifestation of this natural religious temperament.

But there are a number of other appeals which, with varying intensity, affect the Latin American through all

his life, and follow him even to the gates of the grave. Some may be mentioned as follows:

1. *The Church Makes a Strong Appeal to the Senses.*

A French writer declared that a "Protestant church is one of the dreariest places on earth." One who has been accustomed to gorgeous vestments, to alluring music, to an ornate interior of the place of worship, to swinging censers with their clouds of incense, to various altars blazing with lights, to images often decorated with flowers, and, almost human to the untutored mind, in their appealing postures as well as in their sculptural forms, to the stately ritual, intoned in an unknown tongue, and to a growing sense of the mystery of it all, may well understand his remark.

Many men and women like to have their religion interwoven with mystery and magic, with miracle and wonder-working sacrament, with incidents that absorb the interest, and Catholicism emphasises its traditional human elements in a way that makes large appeal to the Latin heart.

The Protestant, perhaps to an unwarranted degree, has banished from his meeting house all that appeals to sense, and boasts that he seeks only that which is spiritual. Many of the Evangelical church edifices in Latin America have been planned by well-intentioned missionary architects who seem to have possessed a peculiar genius for achieving the commonplace and the unattractive. The results of their endeavours are altogether out of harmony with the style of architecture which prevails; hence, the beauty-loving Latin is not attracted to enter the buildings because they do outrage to his artistic temperament.

The Latin American is fond of the ornate, and this fondness is increased in proportion to the degree that Indian blood predominates in his veins. Decorations that seem cheap and tawdry to the colder Anglo-Saxons of the North are to him as visions of Elysian fields, a very fit



dwelling place for God, who, as he has been taught to believe, abides near the altar, enshrouded in the folds of the sacred wafer.

A Mexican writer says:

"The races of the North had in their very nature a predisposition for the severity of Protestant worship; the men of the South, endowed with ardent imagination, could not rest satisfied with such arid practices. The dazzling ceremonies of the Catholic Church and its poetic and ardent petitions, were for them a necessity, a spiritual food, without which they could neither preserve nor understand the religious life of the Spirit."<sup>1</sup>

A service which the writer once attended on the high Bolivian plateau may illustrate this point. Passing along a narrow street of the capital city his attention was attracted by the sound of music issuing from a nearby church. Interested to see an Indian congregation at worship, he entered and remained standing at the door. There were present in all some fifty persons, the majority of them Indians, some of them kneeling, others standing in courteous, if not reverent, attention, others openly scoffing at what was going on about them. The band was playing a selection of secular music; the priests, gorgeously clothed in the vestments of their office, with their backs to the audience, were intoning the mass in Latin, which no one understood; the walls and altars were decorated with bright-coloured tinsel; the air was heavy with sweet-smelling incense; and the blazing candles lit up the scene in vivid contrast to the cold, dark night without.

Into the midst of this service staggered an Indian woman over whose head many winters and summers had passed, leaving her hair white and her features wrinkled and scorched with the cold of the high plains. A heavy burden lay in a sack on her shoulders, and this she gradually eased to the floor, then stood looking about her.

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<sup>1</sup> Riva-Palacio, quoted by H. W. Brown in *Latin America*, p. 243.

Soon she sank to her knees, made the sign of the cross, and continued to gaze with wide open eyes at the lights and the changing scene. The band crashed on, the droning voices of the priests filled in the periods of comparative silence, and people came and went without her notice. Tears began to stream down the weather-beaten face and, after a while, she made once more the sign of the cross, staggered to her feet, lifted the heavy burden and re-adjusted it to her bent shoulders, then went quietly out into the dark, cold night.

## *2. It Appeals to Pride and Social Ambition.*

The hold of the Roman Church on its people, especially in some of the most advanced cities and countries, is largely social. The best families maintain their connection with at least a part of its activities. Few men or women, however slight may be their affection for the Church or its priesthood, would dare content themselves with a purely civil marriage. They call upon one of the local clergy and, when finances permit, even obtain a special blessing from Rome, and have the ceremony performed by the highest local authority. Thousands of young men of careful Protestant upbringing, who have gone to Latin America and there found wives, have felt compelled to sacrifice their own religious convictions on the altar of social convention, and, in the wedding ceremony, have sworn away their own faith, made confession to the officiating priest and promised that children resulting from the marriage shall be brought up in the faith of the mother, under the careful tutelage of the Roman Church. At diplomatic functions, the Pope's representative expects and obtains the place of greatest honour, and in the "Te Deum" sung in the cathedrals on the occasion of the annual celebration of the country's Independence, even an Ambassador of the United States of America has been known to kneel and humbly kiss his hand in token of submission to the Supreme Pontiff.

### 3. *It Appeals to Fear.*

Except in some of the most backward communities, the day has passed when the threat of excommunication produces more than a feeling of pity for those who launch it. However, much disciplinary power is exercised by the Roman Church in Latin America today through timely threats of dire punishment for possible infractions of its laws. The threatened dismissal of a workman, should he embrace Evangelical Christianity, or the withdrawal of all patronage from the corner grocer or druggist for the same offense, will often cause him to change his mind, especially if he has a family dependent on his earnings for their daily bread. Threatened ostracism from social circles is generally effectual in preventing any investigation of Evangelical truths through the reading of literature or through attendance of public services. The sending of children to a mission school, although this may be the only way to save them from complete illiteracy, will often call down on the parents the vengeance of the local priest and cause the children to be withdrawn from the school.

Liberal governments, in large part the outgrowth of Evangelical effort in the various countries, no longer tolerate open aggression; and we can but hope that even the spirit of would-be persecutors is being and will continue to be modified and softened with the passing of the years and the more modern and thorough preparation of the clergy. Many outstanding Catholics, both men and women, openly advocate tolerance and forbearance. Their example can not fail to exert a helpful influence on the more backward masses. The lack of retaliation on the part of Protestants and their forbearance even in the face of severe persecution, must also bear fruit in due season.

### 4. *It Appeals to Those Who Find the Right of Private Judgment Too Burdensome.*

A choice between the different Churches and their systems of government is in no small degree a matter of tem-

perament and early training. The average Protestant, by nature and by education, demands the right of private interpretation and can not be content with less. The Roman Catholic is taught from earliest infancy that the Church is the source of all rightful interpretation, in matters of religion, and he is content to accept its decisions as final. He is taught to follow the teaching of the various Catholic Councils, and the decision of the various popes, as carefully and unquestionably as the sailor follows the compass in his journeys across a troubled sea. It is not his to question. He is not to consider the why or the wherefore of the storms that he may encounter in his path; the route has been marked out for him and his part is to follow it.

One of their own writers has made this comparison:

"In the United States, doubts or controversies about the law are brought finally to the Supreme Court. When its chief justice has handed down the decision of the Court, the case is settled. There is no appeal from the Court, except an appeal to rebellion and arms, which would cut off the appellants from citizenship in the nation. The highest court in the land is, within its proper sphere, as nearly infallible as its human framers could make it. Its decisions are accepted as the truth.

"Though in altogether different orders, there is an analogy between the Supreme Court of the United States and the Magisterium of the (Roman) Church, which is useful as an illustration. In the Church, questions and controversies about faith and morals are finally decided by its Supreme Court. When its Chief Justice hands down his decision, the case is settled. There is no appeal except to private opinion and rebellion against the teaching authority left by Christ. To make such an appeal is to cut one's self off from citizenship in the Kingdom of Christ. This Court is as infallible as its divine founder willed. Its decision is the truth."<sup>1</sup>

That is to say, Romanism is static. No matter what advances the world may make, no new discovery is allowed to change the immutable decisions of long past

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<sup>1</sup> Charles A. Martin, *Catholic Religion*, p. 99.

church councils. Only a year ago a member of the Jesuit order who was upholding the value of one of the institutions of the Church declared that the Jesuit course of college studies has remained unchanged for two hundred years.

One can realise the tremendous attraction of this teaching of authority for those whose temperament does not inexorably demand the right of private investigation and judgment. In the lands that lie within the tropics, in particular, where both physical and intellectual exertion are distasteful, where,—as some one has put it: “the inhabitants are clothed with sunshine and fed by gravitation,”—it comes particularly easy to throw the responsibility on some one else rather than go to the exertion of formulating and adhering to one’s own opinion. In Latin America, the dogma of papal infallibility finds its most general acceptance in the lands that lie nearest to the equator, where life is a *dolce far niente* and mental indolence the rule, with few strivings beyond those necessary to meet the absolute daily physical needs. In the lands that lie to the far South, where intellect is keen and private investigation encouraged, it has been very largely discarded as unworthy our modern life, and altogether inadequate as a solution of its problems.

5. *It Appeals to the Same Love of Architectural Grandeur and Ceremonial Splendour as the Old Primitive Religions of the Continent.*

The original races of the countries that now form Latin America offer no exception to the rule that there is in human nature an intuition of an unseen power, higher than man, which is common to the species. From Patagonia to the Rio Grande, there are scattered reminders of the primitive religions of the continent, some of them, especially in Peru or Yucatan, rivalling in grandeur the ruined temples of Egypt, Greece or Assyria. Their conception of the Great Spirit, the Creator of the Universe,

seems to have been much purer and more elevated than the ideas that prevailed among the ancient nations of Asia. Their services of religion were conducted with a magnificent and minute ceremonial that challenges comparison with the rites of the most ritualistic sects of modern Christendom.

Moreover, many of these beliefs and practices bore a curious likeness to those of the Hebrews, on which Christianity is based, so that adoption of the religion presented by the conquerors did not mean such a radical change of thought as one might imagine. The more advanced peoples, such as the Peruvians and the Mexicans, as well as numerous tribes in what is now Central America, had well defined ideas as to the future existence of the soul, and the physical resurrection of the body. The story of the Garden of Eden, of the deluge, and of the building of the Tower of Babel, are paralleled in Mexican legends with a startling reality. Like the Hebrews, they worshipped toward the East and burned incense toward the four corners of the earth. Confession of sin and atonement by sacrifice; a species of serpent worship; the punishment of adultery by stoning to death; the belief that the rainbow was a promise that the deluge would not be repeated; permission to the high priest, alone, to enter the holy of holies; an Ark which was the abiding place of an invisible God; belief in demoniacal possession, and original sin; the washing of feet; anointing, and the practice of baptism and circumcision are some of the remarkable resemblances to the Hebrew codes of laws and beliefs.

Roman Christianity, on its introduction into these lands, following its usual custom, did not try to do away with all the pagan practices of the conquered peoples, but allowed many of them to remain in force and they have gradually become engrafted on those of the conquering faith. In the interior of the Continent, even today, after four centuries of occupation and teaching by the Roman Church, it would be difficult for an untrained observer to determine,

in many cases, whether the processions and religious services are pagan or Christian. The dress, the movements, the images worshipped, the evident belief and interest of the worshippers might, so far as one can see, be accounted for by either one. Edward Reville has written :

“ It is no part of our task to tell the story of the conversion of the natives to Roman Catholic Christianity. It was comparatively easily affected; the fall of the Incas was a mortal blow to the religious, no less than the political edifice in which they were the keystone of the arch. It was evident that the Sun had been unable or unwilling to protect his children. The conqueror imposed his religion on Peru, as on Mexico, by open force; and the Spanish Inquisition, though not giving rise to such numerous and terrible spectacles in the former as in the latter country, yet carried out its work of terror and oppression there, too. The result was the peculiar character of the Catholicism of the natives of Peru which strikes every traveller, and consists in a kind of timid and superstitious submission, without confidence and without zeal, associated with the obstinate preservation of customs which extend back to the former religious régime, and memories of the golden age of the Inca rule under which their ancestors were obliged to live, but which has gone to return no more.”<sup>1</sup>

A striking instance of the adaptation by Rome of the tenets of her faith to the practices and customs of the people among whom she labours in Latin America, is the worship of the Black Christ of Esquipulas, in Gautemala. According to the tradition, the inhabitants of the town were poor Indians, who, illuminated by the light of the gospel, embraced the Christian religion with love and gladness, and desired to possess an image of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence they united in the sowing of a cotton plantation as a way to get the means to secure it.

The black colour is accounted for by the belief of the Indians that an image of their own hue would show them more favour than would one of the colour of the Spaniards who were their conquerors. The priest in charge

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<sup>1</sup> Reville, *The Native Religions of Mexico and Peru*, pp. 199-200.

claims that the wood carver knew better how to interpret the real condition of our Lord's body after death than other sculptors and carvers have known, inasmuch as Scripture states that His image was marred more than that of any man, and His form more than the sons of men, especially after His terrible suffering on the cross. The real explanation, no doubt, is the wish of the Church to accommodate its teaching to the crude and superstitious ideas of the population.

The primary appeal has been to the innate religious sense of the primitive inhabitant, but the European immigrant, already familiar with the tenets and practices of his church, has had but little or no difficulty in accepting what he has found and adapting himself to the changed expression of his faith. In the cities and large towns, of course, where the population is largely of Latin descent, the form of service used is that to which they have been accustomed, and the problem presented to the Church has been largely that of holding its members faithful to their religious vows and practices.

*6. It Appeals with the Appeal to Be Found in the Great Body of Christian Truth to Which the Church at Large Clings.*

No one who is not of militant anti-papal convictions would dare claim that Roman Christianity, even in Latin America, does not hold to many of the fundamental truths of our common religion. No one who is not fanatically prejudiced would deny that these great truths were held and zealously maintained during the ages, when, otherwise, Christianity must have gone down before the onslaught of paganism. The doctrines of the Trinity, of original sin, of the fatherhood of God, of the atonement through a vicarious sacrifice, of salvation through a Redeemer, of the Holy Spirit and his sanctifying power and holiness, of the forgiveness of sin, of the universal Kingdom of God, of the union of believers in a mystical body,



of the holy sacraments, of the resurrection of the body and of the life everlasting,—all are to be found in the teaching of Latin Christianity. While we can but be appalled as we come to know it, by the mass of superstition and gross evil which have overcrusted these fundamentals, we must yet acknowledge their existence and the appeal which they make to men and women who are spiritually hungry. A well-known writer, who formerly stood high as a Franciscan monk, as lecturer on Sacred Scriptures, and as prefect in noted Roman Catholic colleges, says:

“I myself have witnessed the passing away of some Roman Catholics who gave me the best testimonies I ever saw that Christ was with them in the hour of their death. Moreover, I gladly admit that many of them retain theoretically all the fundamental doctrines and sacraments of Christianity. They believe in the divinity, the incarnation and redemption of Christ. They believe in the remission of sins, in eternal reward for the just, in heaven, and in eternal punishment of the wicked, in hell. They have a Bible as reliable, except in the Apocrypha, as ours. They have churches, altars, sacrifices, worship, preachers, ministers, and regular services. They make of religion as much and many times more than we do; they pray perhaps more than we do; they spend more money perhaps in the service of their churches and the help of their ministers than we do. And, nevertheless, well aware of their true position and of the true significance of my words, I repeat once more and with deep conviction that I am saying the truth, they need the Gospel exceedingly.”<sup>1</sup>

Then, one cannot fail to appraise highly the extensive and well-managed systems of hospitals, orphanages, schools, homes for the old and destitute, and other institutions which this Church maintains, and recognise, too, the fair spirit of Christian charity that lies back of such work. Such facts constitute a strong appeal, not only to the faithful, but also, to the unprejudiced observer, and

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<sup>1</sup> Juan Orts Gonzales, in *Do Roman Catholics Need the Gospel?* ”

do much to strengthen the hold of Rome on the imagination and the affections.

7. *It Appeals on the Ground of Its Antiquity and Supposed Unity.*

The great strength of the Roman Catholic position is in the length of its history, and the apologist of Roman Christianity in Latin America never fails to appeal to the extreme antiquity of his Church, and, in particular, to the long period of service which it has rendered in these countries of the Western Hemisphere. It is pointed out that Protestantism is comparatively modern, and that its influence in Latin America is of very recent origin. The changes also are invariably rung on the innumerable divisions of Protestantism, and these are held up as a proof that we are at war among ourselves and, moreover, have no common goal of endeavour.

The antiquity must be admitted, and also the services rendered Latin America, before Evangelical Christendom awakened to the need of its help in the solution of the problems that vex these young nations. Those who understand the inner workings of the Church, however, assure us that the divisions of Protestantism are no deeper than are those that exist between certain of the orders, which are not divulged to the general public because of the strict discipline to which all are subject. Ancient and ruined temples, and universities founded when the Virgin Queen was beginning her reign in England, denote age and a degree of faithful service in the past. But no institution can live on its past nor will the methods of that past serve under the entirely changed conditions of modern Latin-American life.

## V

### THE APPROACH OF PROTESTANTISM

IN view of all the preceding, which shows the unquestionable need of help from other quarters than the Roman Catholic Church, if Latin America as a whole is to receive the whole gospel, what is to be the attitude of Protestantism? Can it be expected that offers of help will be welcomed by the hierarchy of the Roman Church? Will it be possible for the Evangelical forces to enter Latin America and do their part toward the solution of its pressing problems without being attacked by the representatives of Roman Christianity on the field and by the press of that organisation at home? Experiences of the past afford no ground to suppose that either of these questions may ever be answered in the affirmative.

Freedom of worship, liberty of the press, free speech, free and compulsory instruction, civil marriage, civil cemeteries, and other rights common to all civilised countries, have been secured, in virtually every case, against the organised power of the Church. It would be useless to hope that further advances may be made, under Evangelical influences, without meeting the same spirit of fierce antagonism and open opposition.

What, then, shall be our attitude? Shall the Evangelical Churches of the United States and Great Britain withdraw their forces and admit that Roman Christianity must be left alone to work out the problems of Latin America as it sees fit? Evidently, this can not be done. The world is one great unit today; no nation lives wholly to itself. There are almost no "forbidden" spots, politically. No such area can continue, religiously. By no

legitimate process of reasoning can Latin America be eliminated as a proper and clamant field of Evangelical mission work. Criticism and opposition are bound to come in the future, just as they have already come in the Philippines and in any other country where the Roman Church has felt the influence of Evangelical work; but as the preceding pages have shown, Latin America is truly a land of desperate need, outside of the circle of her wealthy and well-born population. Protestant Christianity has a work to do in Latin America. What should be the manner of its approach?

In speaking on the general theme of cooperation between the two Americas, the president of one of the most influential banks of North America recently made the following statement:

“Pan-Americanism should, of course, mean much more than the mere development of commercial opportunities, and the establishment of trade interests. It should mean the development of a broader and better understanding between the nations of the two Americas. The present is an opportune time for extending old and establishing new friendly relations with the nations of both South and Central America, and with the individuals who constitute those nations. The peaceful intentions of this nation and our worthy national ambitions have been impressed upon our Southern neighbours as never before. They are seeing that the motive underlying our relations with them are not imperialistic. If the recognition of this attitude by the Southern republics is possible along political and commercial lines, I see no reason why there should not be the same attitude and recognition in the development of our higher relations.

“Cooperation in its truest and best form is fundamentally important in producing the proper measure of success. In the South and Central American countries, we find a different people. In the light of previous experience, I do not feel that our efforts will be successful if we endeavour to force upon our Southern neighbours our ideas of education and of religion and creed; but I am sure that we can help reciprocally in promoting the religious and educational conditions in those countries, and in bringing about a more thorough understanding of the aspirations of each. We have much to

learn, as well as to teach, and our efforts in any direction will not be properly productive if we do not learn this lesson. Through a proper recognition of this, we shall be able to gain the confidence of the South American nations, and promote moral values and national and personal ideals."

It is in this spirit that we should enter Latin America with the program of the Evangelical churches. If the most lasting results are to be obtained, we must frankly face the actual moral and spiritual conditions, with no attempt to minimise their importance. While representing the gospel as the only adequate solution of these problems we must yet recognise all the elements of truth and goodness which may be found in the established form of religious faith. Our approach to the people must be neither critical nor antagonistic, but inspired by the teachings and the example of Christ and based on that charity which thinketh no evil and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth. The leadership needed in Latin America is of the type described by St. Augustine, wherein "one loving spirit sets another on fire."

1. *The Evangelical Message Must Recognise the Good in Roman Christianity.*

Missionaries to many lands have the privilege of giving the people a message that is in some respects entirely new. Its acceptance means breaking away from radically different systems and a gradual rejection of teachings that have little or nothing in common with Christianity. In Latin America, the problem of the Protestant missionary is utterly different. His hearers have already received what they consider the only correct interpretation of the gospel. Evangelical truths are looked upon by many of them as heresies, as radical departures from the teaching of the Church through the centuries. The missionary will find that many truths have been well taught, and he will do well to recognise, so far as possible, the excellencies of the instruction given. When he notes the many splendid

Christian men and women in these lands, who have known no other form of the faith, he will become less sure that the keys of Heaven have been delivered into the keeping of his own particular communion; he will find his own sympathies broadening, and he will the more easily and fully appreciate the Christian virtues of those about him. He will need to stand firmly for the great underlying principles of Evangelical Christianity. Differences of opinion inevitably arise and heated discussion must be expected. But he who tries to recognise the good points in the other forms of religion will see more tangible results in the end, and, at the same time, keep his own spirit sweeter and purer, than he who enters into his work in a spirit of conflict, with his eyes deliberately blinded to the excellencies of the older religious organisations and wide open to their smallest faults.

The evangelical missionary to the peoples of Latin America, even before he leaves the home land for his field, will do well if he temper his own spirit to the recognition of certain qualities in the Catholic organisation, which are sometimes lacking among Protestants. He will find, for example, an *esprit de corps* among these brethren which, in recoil from centralised authority, Protestants too often lack; a reverence for the ministering priest that borders on worship and makes his influence among his members paramount; a reverence for the church building as the House of God, which is too evidently lacking among some of the Protestant organisations; and a staunch and unquestioning loyalty to the essential and basic truths of Christianity as they understand them.

And the missionary will do especially well to study the lives and methods of some of the truly great Roman Catholic missionaries of the past centuries. This is not the place to give a complete list of these men, nor to describe their work in full. But no one should fail to familiarise himself with the life and work of Raymund Lull, of the Thirteenth Century, the greatest missionary to the Mos-

lems, a man of unusual spiritual insight and judgment, entirely ruled by love and by a spirit of real catholicity in a period when almost all others bowed in absolute submission to the intolerant authority of the Church as represented in the Holy Office of the Inquisition. In the same century lived St. Francis of Assisi, the first to establish Christian missions in Palestine and in the Turco-Arabic Empire. Francis Xavier, of the Sixteenth Century, was the first Christian missionary to Portuguese India, Japan and China. Pedro Claver and Bartolomé de las Casas, were both Spanish missionaries in Latin America. The first was the ardent defender of the negroes who had been brought over as slaves and dumped by hundreds of thousands on the coasts of South America. The second was almost the sole defender of the Indians against the cruelty and oppression of their Spanish masters. Toribio de Benavente, in the Sixteenth Century, travelled on foot throughout Mexico and Central America, preaching to the Indians. Father Damien was the great apostle in modern times to the lepers on Molokai who, "making the great renunciation, shut to with his own hand the door of his sepulchre."

The student of these lives will find much to benefit him in his own work, and in consequence his attitude toward the Church which they represented will be mellowed.

## 2. *It Must Seek to Christianise, Not to Protestantise.*

The message which the Evangelical missionary must take to Latin America will be Christian, and thoroughly evangelical, but he need lay little emphasis on its controversial features. Inasmuch as ninety-eight per cent. of the population of most of the countries, not counting the pagan Indians, are counted as Roman Catholics, he can hardly escape presenting his message to some members in good standing of that faith. But he will find that many who count themselves faithful Catholics have not found that spiritual satisfaction which their souls craved, and

they will be glad to hear him. A large part of the population, although Catholics in name because of early baptism, may rather be classed as positivists, agnostics, or unbelievers, and with them Evangelical Christianity may succeed where Catholicism has failed.

Latin America is anhungered and athirst with a thirst and hunger that the simple unadorned message of the living Christ can satisfy, if given in the same spirit of love and truth that characterised the Master. In the schools, in particular, in order to meet this condition, the message must be thoroughly Christian, and no opportunity lost to impress it upon young hearts and plastic minds. But it would be unfair, even un-Christian, for the teacher to take advantage of his position to exalt his own personal beliefs and belittle those of the parents of his pupils. If Christ enters the heart of the child, in the fullness of His power, there need be no fear of the result in the life of the future man or woman. And what does it matter that this work be done under this or that ecclesiastical banner, provided only that it be done?

### *3. It Must Be Irenic, Rather Than Polemic.*

No doubt there was a time when polemics were necessary to the introduction of Evangelical Christianity in Latin America. It may be true that there is still need for such work in the press and from the pulpit, in some of the more backward countries and that this necessity may continue for many years to come. Yet, on the whole, the evangel presented in a loving spirit that recognizes the frailty of the messenger as well as that of those who hear, will, in the end, produce more lasting results. Great crowds may be gathered by an eloquent speaker who makes an attack on Roman Catholicism, or a daily paper that is on the verge of bankruptcy may have new life injected into it and thus prolong its existence by launching, through its columns, repeated tirades against the clergy. Yet these destructive methods produce ephemeral results,



while the constructive message edifies the believer, and in the end gains lifelong adherents for the cause presented. The missionary is to enter Latin America, not as the foe of Roman Catholicism, but as one who goes to the help of such people therein as have never known the power of vital Christianity and who never expect to experience it through the ministrations of the Church of their fathers. The task is not one of polemics, which would reach but a fraction of a people that is largely illiterate; nor is it one of differential theology. The missionary goes to meet a situation similar to that in the Philippines, which was described by a Roman Catholic priest in these words: "an appalling spirit of religious indifference is settling upon the rising generation, which is growing up without religion and without God. . . . Unless mighty efforts are now made to save the country, it will degenerate into a godless and atheistic land."

#### 4. *The Message Must Be Free from Politics.*

One of the great objections made to the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church is its persistent meddling with politics. This is a trait of that organisation which is not altogether limited to Latin America, but in these lands it has earned for the priests of Rome the loss of confidence and the vigorous opposition of many of the most influential laymen. The Evangelical missionary, as a foreigner, can have no active part in the political life of the country to which he is sent, and will beware of any attempt to influence the people to whom he ministers in favour of or against any local political organisation.

This must be particularly true of missionaries who are citizens of the United States of America. Latin Americans are extremely patriotic and resent any interference by foreigners in their political life. Add to this fact the strong undercurrent of hostility to the United States because of real or fancied wrongs in the past, and it will be seen why not a few Latin Americans profess to believe

that the missionary movement is, in some way, befriended from Washington and has as its final end the political hegemony of these lands.

Unfortunately, it must be confessed that the policies dictated and enforced by the State Department at Washington, in the past, have not always been wise or just in their relation to these young and very susceptible republics. The brandishing of the "big stick" has sometimes produced immediate results, but it has left scars that still fester and burn. Chile, Colombia, Panama, Central America and Mexico have all felt the heavy hand of our government at some time in their history, and they and their neighbours have long and retentive memories. Moreover, professional agitators do not fail to remind them of the past and warn them as to the future, and the echoes of "*I took Panama*" will long reverberate among the mountains and across the plains of our twenty sister republics to the south. The Evangelical missionary is to be the ambassador of a power mightier than any earthly government and he cannot afford to jeopardise his work by association with any party in local politics, nor by the slightest expression or deed that might suggest any connection with a foreign power. By his work he may come to be a minister of reconciliation between warring factions, or for the establishment of better international relations. But he will do this through absolute loyalty to Him whose gospel he preaches and the assiduous presentation of that same gospel as the panacea for all ills, international as well as local. He may thus keep out of politics and yet take advantage of his abundant opportunity to make it known that Evangelical religion, far from having a quarrel with democracy, is its most ardent supporter and fountain.

##### 5. *It Must Emphasise the Social Gospel.*

The mystical sentimental aspect of Christianity has been emphasised by the Roman Catholic clergy in Latin America. The social gospel with its attempt to bring Heaven

down to earth, to better the conditions among which we live, to lift up the poor, to educate the illiterate, will make an appeal that cannot fail to attract even the most bitter enemies of the preaching of the past. Dispensaries under Evangelical auspices for the very poor have often awakened interest on the part of busy physicians and enlisted their sympathetic help. Free schools have the moral and sometimes the financial support of Governments and individuals, and the Evangelical Church, in so far as it has linked itself with such movements, has met with the enthusiastic and helpful response of the community.

*6. The Messenger's Life Can Be Made to Count for More Than His Message.*

Latin America needs the stimulus of Christian living as much as that of preaching, and possibly more. Impurity and the double standard for the sexes is looked upon as both necessary and right. The Christian home, where pure love holds sway, is a mighty agency for good, and its influence extends far beyond the circle that may be reached by the preached word. The young men and women who teach in the mission schools are studied as carefully as the lessons they assign and the Evangelical missionary is in real truth a living epistle, known and read of all men.

*7. The Messenger Must Be of High Culture.*

Probably no other mission field demands men and women of higher culture than those who should be sent to Latin America. In one of the Reports of the Panama Congress we find these words:

"While emphasising our belief that the work of a missionary demands special devotion, special gifts and special temperament, it is our abiding conviction that because Latin peoples possess an historic background and atmosphere, gentle and refined manners, and are uniquely susceptible to culture and the graces culture brings, the work in Latin

America demands as missionaries men of broad vision, wide culture, and diplomatic temperament. The Latin is quick to discern the real lack in his rougher-mannered brother from the aggressive North or elsewhere, and quicker to resent the implied suggestion that anything or anybody is good enough for them. On the other hand, none is quicker than he to appreciate the effort of sympathetic students of Latin American customs and manners. A Pauline gift of sympathy as well as a Pauline temper of adaptability seems almost a prerequisite to success in Latin America."<sup>1</sup>

The very best that Evangelical Christianity can give Latin America is not too good for its cultured and appreciative peoples.

#### 8. *It Must Include the Whole Population.*

No program of missions for Latin America will be complete that does not include special work and specially prepared workers for the unevangelised native population. The working classes and those higher in the social category have received the gospel, although in an imperfect and distorted form; but many millions of pagan Indians still look in vain for the only message that can bring light to their darkened souls. Their cry comes up from the great tropical forests and from the barren huts scattered over the high, cold plains,—“*How long, oh Lord, how long?*”—and only Evangelical Christianity can answer it.

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. I, p. 327.

## VI

### THE OPPORTUNITY PSYCHOLOGICAL

EVANGELICAL missions have been working in Latin America for a half century—in some of the countries for a longer time, and in others for less—but these years have been, in a sense, only preparatory to the initiation of their real program. Much work had to be done to prepare the ground before seed-sowing could be begun on a large scale, and with assurance of a bountiful harvest. In most countries, it was necessary to secure the enactment of laws which would permit the exercise, even in private, of any religion other than that of the official Church, and of others which would give to individuals not members of that Church, including Protestants, equal civil rights. Such laws have now been enacted in practically all countries, against the fiercest opposition of the clergy, and, with equal rights, in the fullest sense of the word, Evangelical Christianity may now begin its greatest chapter of service in behalf of Latin America. For this, conditions are highly favourable.

#### 1. *Politically Considered.*

(a) *Because of the Attitude of the United States in the World War.*—When the United States finally decided to enter the World War in defense of the rights of democracy, a great step was taken toward gaining the warmest admiration of her neighbours to the South. The proposed League of Nations received the enthusiastic support of the various Congresses, and is still their hope for the future.

This political reaction in favour of the United States has had a liberalising influence all through Latin America;

and mission work done by North Americans, particularly that related to education, is more favourably considered than at any time in the past. Leading writers, through the press, have not failed to ascribe much of the greatness of the Northern republic to its liberal laws in regard to religion, and to the powerful Protestant influence among its people. As never before, Latin Americans are willing and anxious to learn more of this heretofore neglected, if not altogether despised, form of religion.

(b) *Our Political Supremacy Begets Moral and Spiritual Responsibility.*—There can be no question that the United States holds supreme political power in the Western Hemisphere. This is a very real fact, although some of the nations of Europe, as well as some of those of Latin America, may hesitate about acknowledging it. The political fate of these nations, due largely to the benevolent action of the Monroe Doctrine, depends in large measure on the will of the President and Congress of the United States of America. New York is the financial Mecca of Latin America, if not of the whole world, and from it must come those loans without which no one of these countries seems able to keep up industrial and commercial expansion. This political supremacy has, in a sense, been unsought, but once attained entails a tremendous responsibility. Having made their own influence supreme by preventing other nations from acquiring territorial rights within this great region, will the people of the United States stop there or will they endeavour to exercise their great influence for the good of the peoples of Latin America? Having assured political independence to these peoples, will they not go a step further and assist them in securing religious freedom?

## 2. Morally Considered.

(a) *Confidence in Evangelicals Shown by the Governing Class.*—One of the most encouraging features in the work of modern Evangelical missions in Latin America

is the confidence shown the missionaries by liberal statesmen and others high in authority. Many cases could be cited in which officials have consulted missionaries in regard to matters of importance, were it not that such consultations have often been of a private nature. A few may, however, be given.

In Peru even, an exceedingly conservative country, there have been evidences of this confidence. When the Government proposed to build a road in one of the out-of-the-way mountain districts, it is said that the President signed the bill granting the funds, only on condition that the Protestant missionary in that region act as treasurer, and handle the money. In the same country an educational missionary was consulted by the chairman of a Congressional committee named for the purpose of remoulding the entire educational system, in regard to the best method of reaching the Indian population. When industrial schools were suggested he said:

"If you will get some Evangelical Society to come to Peru and establish such schools, I promise that it will receive both the moral and financial support of the Government."

Then he added:

"We do not want these schools to fall into the hands of the official Church."

In Paraguay, the President of the republic said to this same educator:

"We need industrial schools in this country. If those whom you represent will come in, I will see that they get all the land they need, and we will encourage them in any way possible."

And the President of Ecuador said to the same missionary, at the close of a long conversation, in which certain plans for the Evangelical work in his country had been explained:

"Count on me, both privately and officially, for any service that I can render you, or those whom you represent, in carrying out any program that looks to the ennobling and education of the people of my country."

It is well understood that employers, in many cases, give the preference to Protestant employees.

(b) *The Mission School Crowded to Its Utmost Capacity*.—No other form of Evangelical activity affords such an unusual opportunity of influencing Latin America as the mission school. No matter what the grade of these schools, from kindergarten to university courses, they are almost always crowded, and, in many cases, there is a waiting list. Both parents and Government officials recognise the superior grade of instruction, and, in particular, the careful attention given to the moral education of the pupil.

In most cases, the mission school, in order to meet its expenses, is obliged to charge a considerable fee. In spite of this fact, so great is the confidence of parents in the superiority of the education received, that, in the large cities as well, where there are splendid State schools which give free instruction, the mission school, even when duplicating the Government curriculum, is generally obliged to turn away applicants.

No greater opportunity could be asked by Evangelical Christianity than the present one in which many thousands of children are receiving their education from Christian teachers and their training for future service. This opportunity is limited only by the lack of proper equipment and by the inadequate number of Christian teachers who are offering themselves for this work.

(c) *The Changed Lives of Converts*.—Wherever the Evangelical Church has secured a hearing there have been conversions of men and women who have evidenced in their changed lives the power of the gospel to reform character. Many who had lived together with no sanction by church or state have married and set up Christian



homes. Drunkards have been reclaimed and made valuable members of the community. Bandits have come to the services with the intention of killing the preacher, and have remained to sit at his feet and learn of Jesus. The thorough permeation of the community by evangelical Christianity must of necessity be slow; but effects already are so evident in the uplift of those who have heard and accepted its message, that there is no longer an element of reproach in the term "Evangélico."

Faithful Evangelical Christians do not patronise the lottery or the bull-fights; they do not become drunkards, but favour temperance and total abstinence; their influence and example are in favour of the home which has been duly constituted according to the laws of the country; they are not found among the Sabbath breakers; their children are in school, where they learn how to become useful members of society; they are not brawlers, and are seldom found in the police court. These are characteristics that are as yet but little appreciated by many of their neighbours; yet they work mightily to the benefit of the community of which they form a part, and they count heavily in developing a sentiment favourable to the work of Evangelical Christianity

## VII

### RESULTS THAT MAY BE EXPECTED

VERY often the mission Board, as well as the missionary on the field, is over eager for immediate and tangible results. Gifts must be secured in generous measure from the home base, and, too often, the giver wishes concrete proof in the statistics from the field that his generosity has been justified. To the mind of the writer, there are results of a different kind that may also be expected which are of equal or greater value to Christianity in the large and which will be sought for by the earnest missionary. Some of these may be mentioned, as follows :

#### 1. *The Building Up of An Evangelical Community.*

The prospective growth of Evangelical bodies in the future may be judged from the results of such work in the past. In every country of Latin America there already exists such a community of believers which has grown out of the work of the missionaries. In some countries, where the force has been small and handicapped by local conditions, there is scarcely yet more than a nucleus from which the larger body must grow. In others, the Evangelicals already form an appreciable portion of the population with an influence that is far out of proportion to their numbers. Brazil reports some 450,000 Evangelical Christians and adherents. Some of the leading men of the nation are active members, and many others of influence lend their sympathetic endorsement to the work that is being done by the Evangelical Churches. In Montevideo, Uruguay, the congregation that worships in the Central Methodist Episcopal Church is as representa-

tive of the best people of the country as the average congregation would be in any of our own cities. This is equally true of the great Presbyterian church in Rio de Janeiro.

In Mexico there is a large Evangelical body and many of the principal offices of the Government have been held by Evangelicals. In Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, some of the countries of Central America, the West Indies, Colombia, and Venezuela, there are strong congregations that exercise no inconsiderable influence on the life of these nations. Even in the republic of Ecuador, into which no one of the great Boards has yet entered, there are groups of believers, due, in most cases, to the work of independent missionaries attached to those smaller American Church bodies whose means as well as workers are limited.

The attitude of the people toward Evangelical workers has greatly changed. One of the missionaries in Guatemala has recently written:

In 1882 as a measure of safety against fanaticism the President had an armed guard walk on either side of the only missionary, and that in the streets of the national capital; today, it is difficult to provoke even a remote villager to throw a brick at one for religious reasons. In those early days a tract was likely to be crumpled and thrown back at the distributor; now, in street or train, hands are stretched out and all Protestant literature eagerly received. Liberals welcomed us then, but frankly told us they were not fools enough to believe our religion; now many of those same men are being baptised, and most of them are sending their daughters to our girls' school to get our religion.

"Then a congregation was almost an impossibility to secure; today there are more than five hundred and as many more potential ones, and one may travel on foot in any direction across the inhabited part of the land and stop morning, noon and night with a Protestant congregation. Then we were everywhere considered as a destructive element, anti-Roman if not anti-theistical; they have awakened to the fact that Protestantism is splendidly constructive on the side of all that is best. We were outcasts, and only outcasts who

had nothing to lose would come with us; now the intellectuals are being baptised, the best people have us conduct their funerals and weddings, and in advertisements for help appears at times the very significant note, '*A Protestant preferred.*'"<sup>1</sup>

With this change of attitude has come a great advance in the number of Protestant believers. In the small island of Porto Rico, in which Evangelical work was begun after the war with Spain, the different organisations have advanced to a surprising degree. Their published statistics show that there are, in the island, two hundred forty-eight ministers and other workers; four hundred ninety-seven places in which preaching is done; one hundred ninety-one organised churches; 11,747 members in full communion; two hundred ninety-seven Bible schools; 21,194 pupils in these schools; one hundred one societies for young people, with 3,733 members; seventy-one church buildings, and church property to the total value of \$1,670,450. All this has been accomplished in about twenty years.

With such promising beginnings, we can but expect that in coming years this and other church bodies will greatly increase in number and membership, with a corresponding increase in the impact which they will make on the life of the people.

## 2. *A Changed Social Conscience.*

With the extension of evangelical truth throughout Latin America, we may rightly anticipate a new social order, growing out of a deeper sense of responsibility for the ills that now abound and their deadening effect on spiritual life and effort. There is already an awakening to the peril that lurks in the lottery, the legalised gaming table, the races and the bull-fight, although these are endorsed at present by the state and a goodly proportion of

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<sup>1</sup> Edward M. Haymaker, in *The Presbyterian Magazine*, May, 1922.

their proceeds go to the help of institutions of charity. Urged to action by the success of the prohibitory movement in the United States, a number of countries look forward to the suppression of the drink traffic within a short time, and have already curtailed its evil effects on their people by the enactment of certain restrictive laws and regulations.

Women, especially those of the working class, will also be given their rights and the terrible scourge of illegitimacy and child abandonment will be reduced. The working man, especially on the great estates of the interior, where he is but little more than a driven beast of burden, will come to be recognised as a fellow human being, with rights equal to those of his employer, and the official Church, itself, which has either abetted many of the present social evils or silently acquiesced in them, raising no voice of protest, will awaken to a realisation of its dignity and power and lend its help to their eradication. This changed social conscience will be the result of the penetration of the masses by the truths of the gospel, intelligently and perseveringly carried on by the forces of Evangelical Christianity.

### 3. *A Deeper Mutual Appreciation by Romanists and Evangelicals.*

In unitedly carrying out these reforms, there will of necessity come a better understanding between the representatives of these two great bodies of Christians. Evangelicals will come to know and appreciate the many splendid men and women of the Roman Catholic Church who have felt they had to silently endure conditions which they could not change, and this awakened respect will extend also to the Roman Catholics, who, as many are already doing, will realise that Protestantism is not of the Evil One, but a religion whose fundamentals are the same as those on which their own faith professes to rest. The writer has had many opportunities to speak to cultured

Roman Catholics, among them members of the clergy, who have assured him that they considered him a brother in Christ. "We may differ in details," they have said, "but we are one on the essentials."

One of the missionaries in Colombia states that in a conversation with a local priest in which they were discussing the ignorance, superstition, and awful conditions of immorality which surrounded them, the priest exclaimed: "Yes! there are terrible things happening in the Roman Church! Terrible things! You do not know how terrible! My great desire is that your work may prosper,—that it may prosper in all Colombia!"

Roman Christianity has lacked in its work in Latin America that spur of friendly emulation which has been supplied to it by Protestantism in the United States. As a speaker at the Congress of Panama, Judge Emilio del Toro, put it: "In my judgment, the beneficent influence which Roman Catholicism has exercised in the development of its civilisation in Latin America would have been greater had it been obliged to contend face to face from the earliest times with a vigorous Protestant movement."

We may note that even now a kindlier feeling on the part of both grows as they go forward to the task of Christianising these lands, and this spirit of toleration and mutual helpfulness must continue to increase as the knowledge each has of the other becomes deeper.

Only those who labour under a naïve misconception of facts can imagine that only their own religion is altogether good and that all others are wholly bad as to belief and practice; and it would seem to be obvious that the true missionary will endeavour to utilize for good as fully as possible every point of contact of his own faith with that of the people to which he goes. Especially should this be true with regard to work done by Evangelicals in Roman Catholic lands where the points of contact are so many and so vital, both positively and by way of contrast.

#### 4. *An Awakening on the Part of the Indifferent and Hostile.*

The cessation of this foolish warring between rival Christian Churches, worthy only of the Middle Ages and utterly at variance with twentieth century ideas of tolerance and goodwill, cannot fail to awaken interest in the message of Christianity among the indifferent and hostile. As already shown, this description applies to the large majority of the thinking men of Latin America, and it is unfortunate that the Church has lost their loyalty and support in the past. When Roman Catholic and Protestant, alike, unite in giving to the people "the divine teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, conveyed in the same spirit of love and truth in which they fell from the lips of the Master," there will be a great awakening among the army who now look upon sacerdotalism with scorn and enmity, and who, in their ignorance, reject the entire Christian message as puerile and unworthy of their notice.

#### 5. *Increased Confidence and Support at the Home Base.*

It is but just to expect that as the needs of Latin America become better known, there will be a greatly increased interest in the homeland in the work that is being done by the Evangelical churches in that section of the mission field. This interest will express itself both in greater financial support and in the offer of young, enthusiastic, well-prepared men and women to carry forward the program. The nations are turning to these lands with an increasing commercial interest, and are vying with each other in the rush to make paying investments. It has been estimated that Great Britain, alone, receives in income from her investments, each month, more than the total amount invested in Evangelical missions to these lands in the last hundred years. No careful estimate of the amount accruing to American investors is available, but it cannot be much less. The consciences of these nations must be awakened to the need of *giving* something pro-

proportionate to Latin America, instead of *taking* all possible out of it.

This paragraph would not be altogether complete nor fair, were due acknowledgment not made at this point of the generous help already given Evangelical work by many of the foreign and national firms of Latin America, as well as by individuals. A very great deal of the great progress already made would have been utterly impossible without these generous and continuous contributions. Many of the old established and prosperous British firms, as well as individuals of that nationality, have been particularly helpful; but many from our own land and from European countries have also carried the Evangelical work very near to their hearts and have aided it as their own fortunes have been prospered. When the need of these peoples for sympathetic help once takes hold of the conscience of our own people, the outpouring of consecrated wealth will be greatly increased and Evangelical work will go forward much more vigourously than has been possible up to the present time.

And, furthermore, the conscience of the youth of our land will be challenged to consecrate life and talents to the giving of their fellow Americans of Spanish, Portuguese, and French tongues the inestimable riches which they themselves have received in such abundance.



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Readers who may wish to secure the latest books on Latin America may do so by writing The Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, 25 Madison Avenue, New York City, or the various publishing houses mentioned in the following list.

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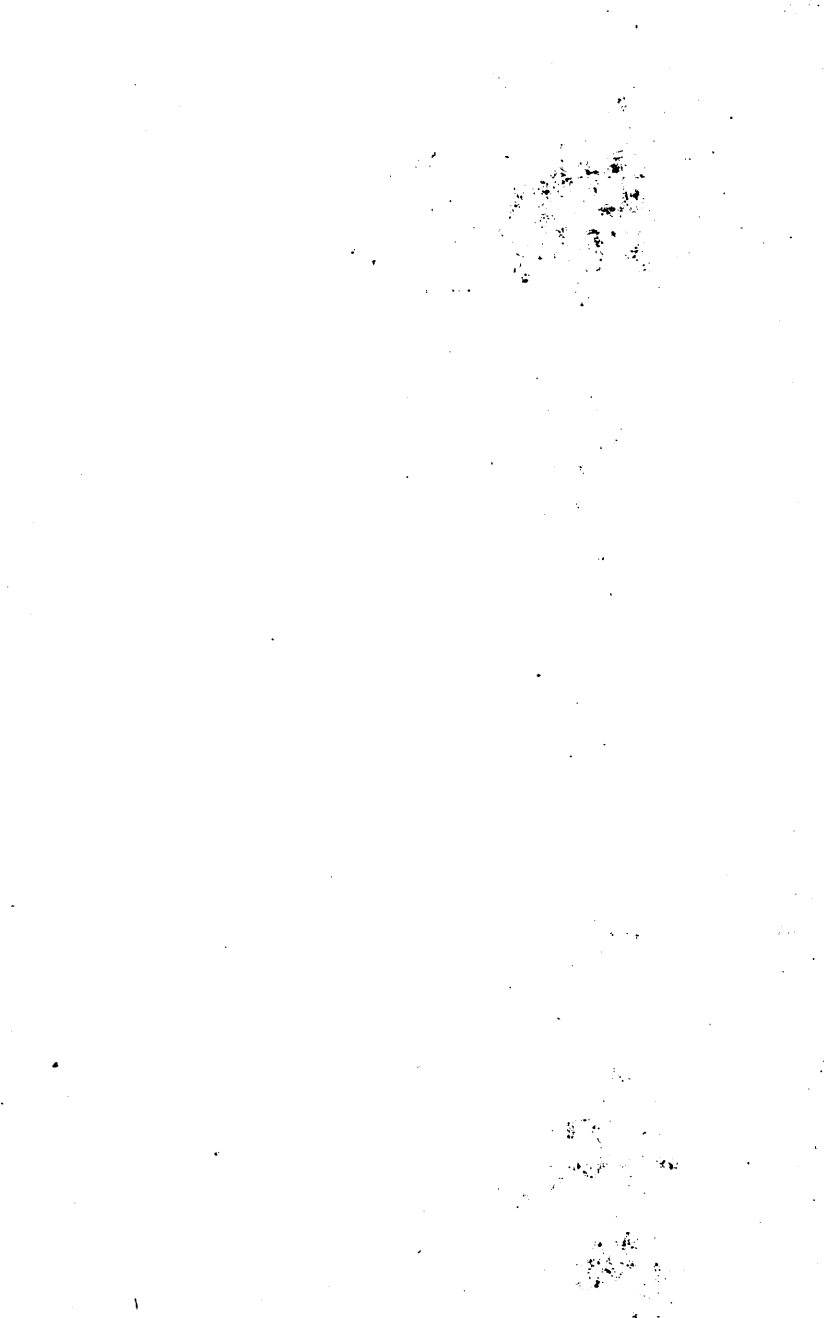
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